



Horticulture  
Industry Network

# Vegetable IDO Update



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## Pythium and Parsnip Canker

New options to control Pythium induced root rots are being investigated by **Dr Liz Minchinton** and her team at DPI Knoxfield.

The project , VG08026 – “**Identification of IPM strategies for Pythium induced root rots in Apiaceae vegetable crops**”, is funded by Horticulture Australia Limited.

Parsnip Canker is prevalent in autumn sown crops harvested in spring and appears as sunken brown shoulder lesions on the root.

**Pythium causes :**

- **damping off** of direct sown crops such as Carrot, Parsley & Parsnips seedlings
- **cavity spot** on Carrots
- **root rots** in many hydroponic crops
- and predisposes **Parsnips** to Canker

“Many fungi are associated with Parsnip Canker and it is an extremely difficult disease to control”, said **Dr Minchinton**.

**Research from WA recommends planting Broccoli before Parsnips as Broccoli is not a host of Pythium.**

Field trials in 2009 showed applications of a Pythium selective fungicide could reduce Parsnip Canker by 30% on sandy soils but the fungicide was ineffective in clay soils.

Canker also appeared worse in Parsnips grown in heavy soil where cool, wet conditions favour Pythium infections.

“As the soil began to warm up after winter, other pathogens including Phoma, Rhizoctonia and Fusarium, became active in both, clay and sandy soils”, said project scientist **Dr Joanna Petkowski**.

**Where possible, avoid sowing Parsnip crops in heavy soils during autumn.**



Growers & Researchers inspecting parsnip trials

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