Garden mums are starting to show color, and are generally looking good. Wholesalers are busy shipping and retailers are hoping for a good start to the fall season. Only a few minor issues have recently been brought to my attention.

**Bacterial Leaf Spot on Garden Mums**

All the heavy rains have encouraged bacterial leaf spot, but often it’s only on a particularly susceptible variety. Bacterial leaf spot, caused by *Pseudomonas cichorii* tends to be problematic not only during warm weather with periods of heavy rains, but also if you are using overhead watering. Look for large black spots concentrated at the base of the plant. Spots often begin at the leaf margin but may also occur randomly. These leaf spots are soft when tissue is wet and sunken and brittle when the leaves are dry. Leafspots can progress into the petiole to the stem, with a stem canker developing.

Key management practices include starting with pathogen-free cultivars, resistant varieties, proper sanitation, and avoiding overhead irrigation or handling plants when they are wet. Once plants become infected with bacteria, it is best to rogue infected plants. Bactericides such as copper sprays are of limited effectiveness once an outbreak develops and infected plants cannot be cured. Copper sprays or the biological fungicide *B. subtilis*, Cease, will help protect against this disease. These materials do not cure the disease, however, they limit spreading to uninfected plants. Make notes when you see susceptible varieties and avoid growing them in the future.

![Figure 1: Bacterial Leaf Spot on Garden Mums, Photo by L. Pundt](image)
**Blotch Leafminer on Garden Mums**

Damage caused by blotch leafminer was recently found on garden mums. The damage may be confused with leaf spot diseases. Blotch leafminers generally make large mines without a particular pattern. Several types of leafminers will attack mums, some producing the more familiar winding or serpentine mines, others produce a more blotch-like leaf mine.

![Blotch Leafminer on Garden Mums](image)

**Figure 2: Blotch Leafminer on Garden Mums, Photo by L. Pundt**

**Alternaria Leaf Spot on Poinsettia**

Symptoms of Alternaria Leaf spot on poinsettia are easily confused with Xanthomonas or bacterial leaf spot or poinsettia scab. Look for small spots with a tan center. Plants need to be sent to a diagnostic laboratory for confirmation of this disease. Reducing leaf wetness, removing diseased plants (if only a few are infected) and applying fungicides labeled for leaf spot diseases on poinsettia. Many options are available; I have only read that the thiophanate-methyl materials are not effective.

![Alternaria Leaf Spot on Poinsettia](image)

Keep checking your poinsettia root systems! Now is the time to encourage good root growth and manage fungus gnat larvae.