Garlic and Onion Rust—A problem in cool Wet Springs

Infection is wind-carried to other plantings of related species of Alliums (garlic, onions, leeks, etc). Plants die if heavily infected, and bulbs are stunted and dry. There are no known resistant species. Prolonged cold wet seasons (i.e. spring) encourage this rust, Puccinia allii. Anti-fungal properties of dilute (50%) vinegar sometimes helps if you notice the yellow pustules forming.

Microscopic view of the yellow urediniospores from the pustules on the leaves in spring. They form white spots on the leaves early in spring, then mature into these yellow spores. The wind can carry them a long way and infect other fields and gardens.

For additional information and photos, go to Arizona Univ. Plant Path. Website

Judy Roger photos