

Fact sheet

Brown rot

What is Brown rot?

Brown rot (*Monilinia fructigena*) is a fungal pathogen that develops similar symptoms to another Brown rot in stone fruits (*M. fructicola*), which causes serious economic problems in stone fruit in Australia.

What does it look like?

Infected fruit typically develop spreading, firm, brown spots that rapidly develop into rotting. These rotting areas will normally be surrounded by conidial pustules, often in concentric circles. These pustules resemble small, raised white-cream spots. Within five days of infection, the entire fruit can rot and will be covered with pustules. Infected fruits become mummified and tend to remain on the tree.

Symptoms can spread to the stems resulting in blighted twigs developing into cankers. Leaves may turn dark brown and remain attached instead of falling. Cankers are generally restricted to the twigs and do not extend into the previous year's wood.

At harvest, apparently healthy fruit may be contaminated with spores and will decay during storage and marketing.

What can it be confused with?

Brown rot produces similar symptoms to other *Monilinia* species that are present in Australia such as *M. fructicola*; however, Brown rot produces more severe symptoms in apples and pears than these species. Pustule development in concentric circles on the fruit surface may suggest the presence of Brown rot.



Stem blight symptoms of infection, including blossom rot

Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension
Slide Series, Bugwood.org



Concentric circles of conidial pustules on rotting fruit

Pavel Skrynik



Infected fruit can become mummified



What should I look for?

The development of brown rotting areas on fruit, particularly when surrounded by pustules. Mummified fruit and brown leaves that remain on the tree are further signs of Brown rot infection.

How does it spread?

Fungal spores can be spread by wind and rain, and the pathogen can also be spread with infected plant material. Fruit-to-fruit contact will spread the pathogen within a single tree.

Where is it now?

Brown rot is found in most temperate regions of Europe, Asia, North Africa and some South American countries.

How can I protect my orchard from Brown rot?

Source plant material only from 'clean', accredited suppliers, and preferably material that is certified. Check your orchard frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common summerfruit diseases so you can tell if you see something different.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline

EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881

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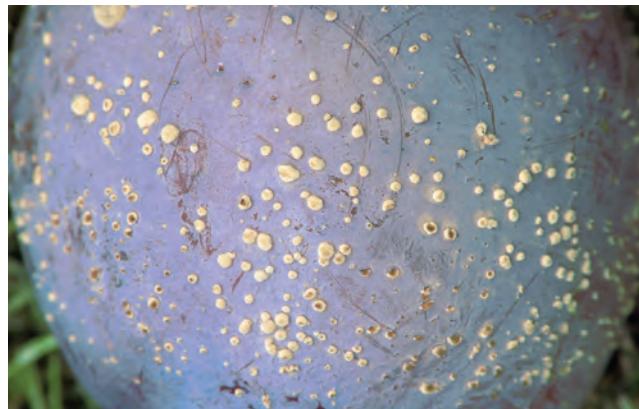


Brown rot on apricot

Michal Manas



Conidial pustule formation does not always occur in concentric circles



Brown rot on plum

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