

## Peach yellow leafroll phytoplasma

### What is it?

This phytoplasma, which causes the diseases Almond brownline and decline (ABLD) and Almond kernel shrivel (AKS), is potentially transmitted by psyllids or, more frequently, through infected planting material. There are several strains of the pathogen with almond symptom development dependent on the scion/rootstock combinations.

### What to look for?

Yellow, thinning canopies in almond orchards can be caused by infection by this phytoplasma.

The rootstock determines the rate of decline of infected trees. The plum rootstock Marianna promotes a rapid decline of infected almonds, particularly evident at the union as a brown line of dead cells, pitting of the wood under bark at the union, stunting, small leaves and bark splits (ABLD).

Infected almonds on peach rootstock, are more likely to produce symptoms of AKS. In these trees, budburst is delayed, new shoots can be stunted, leaves are pale and smaller, canopies are thin and the harvested kernels are shrivelled. However, the overall tree decline is slow.



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Symptoms of almond kernel shrivel on peach rootstock



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Almond trees on peach rootstock with kernel shrivel disease

### Where is it found?

Peach yellow leafroll phytoplasma is found widely amongst tree fruits, but infections in almond are apparent only in the USA.



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Small green leaves and stunted shoots caused by ABLD



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Pitting & necrosis along unions caused by ABLD



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Almond brown line and decline caused by ABLD

Transmission of the pathogen is most likely through the planting of infected material. However, since older trees may become infected, spread by insect vectors is also likely.

### Best protection for my orchard?

Ensure that all planting stock is pest-free and that compatible rootstocks are used. Maintain good orchard hygiene practices to reduce potential vector levels.

Neglected orchards and feral almonds should be reported to your local department of primary industries.

Check your orchard frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common pests so you can tell if you see something different.

**If you see anything unusual,  
call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline  
on 1800 084 881.**

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