

Chestnut blight

What is it?

Chestnut blight (caused by *Cryphonectria parasitica*) is a devastating disease of chestnuts that is not present in Australia.

The fungus enters through wounds in the bark and grows underneath it causing a canker symptom. These cankers are not easily seen on older thick barked trees until they crack open exposing the buff-coloured inner bark and orange fungal fruiting structures.

Eventually the fungus girdles and kills the branch above the infection point. This branch loss stimulates the tree to sprout from below the infection point or from the collar region, in an attempt to replace lost limbs.

This disease can kill the tree if the trunk is girdled by a large canker or several cankers growing together.

What to look for

This fungus attacks the trunk and branches of trees so the first signs of infection is often seen as wilting, yellowing and death of leaves and shoots. Yellow-brown to orange cankers on young smooth barked trees or branches may also be early signs of infection.

This fungus is spread by animals that come into contact with the cankers and through the air after rain. To maximise the chance of eradication, you should report it immediately.

Where is it found?

Chestnut blight occurs in Japan, China, Korea, USA, Canada, Italy and throughout Europe and infects chestnut, oak, red maple, shagbark hickory, and eucalyptus.



Lethal canker on main stem

UGA1400112

Linda Haugen, USDA Forest Service



Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development Archives, Hungary

Swelling and bark cracking on a 13-year old chestnut tree caused by chestnut blight in Hungary

How can I protect my orchard from Chestnut blight?

Check your orchard frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common nut 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

EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881

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