

# Brown rot

*Monilinia fructigena*

## Which crops does it affect?

Brown rot affects sweet cherry and sour cherry. It also affects apple, pear, quince, stone fruit, apricot, plum, almond, peach, nectarine, Japanese plum, grapevine, azalea, roses, tomato, hazelnut, capsicum, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry, blueberry and fig.

## Which part of the plant will be damaged?

Fruit, flowers, leaves and stems.

## What should I look for?

- Infection of fruit can take place at any time during fruit development, but the disease is only severe in ripe or ripening fruits.
- Brown rot on ripening or mature fruit typically develops as a rapidly spreading, firm, brown decay.
- The first symptoms on ripe fruits are small, superficial, circular brown spots that quickly begin rotting. Within days the fruit are completely rotten and almost the entire surface is covered with fungi.
- Eventually the whole fruit becomes discoloured and dried, making it look mummified.
- Mummified fruit hangs on branches of trees until Spring or falls to the ground where it remains throughout the Winter months and becomes partly or completely buried beneath the soil or leaf litter.
- An egg-shaped canker can form on small branches, and gum is found at the advancing margin.
- Usually cankers are restricted to twigs and are not found on the previous year's wood. Cankers do not continue to enlarge from one season to the next.
- When environmental conditions are suitable, active cankers produce fungal spores.

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## How does it spread?

Brown rot spreads via infected plant material, mechanical actions, airborne spores, pruning tools and/or insects.

Be aware that there are established brown rots in Australia. If you find a brown rot which causes more damage than normal or does not respond to the usual management strategies including chemical control you should call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.



Brown rot symptoms on sweet cherry.

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Brown rot symptoms on cherry.

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