

UC Pest Management Guidelines

AVOCADO PHYTOPHTHORA FRUIT ROT

Pathogen: *Phytophthora citricola*
(Reviewed: 7/01, updated: 6/99)



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SYMPTOMS

Affected fruit are often touching the soil or are hanging on the lower branches. Most damage occurs within 1 meter of the soil surface. Diseased fruit have a distinct circular black area that usually occurs at the lowest spot on the fruit. While most infections occur at the bottom of the fruit, they can occur anywhere on the surface. Internally, the rot extends into the flesh, darkening it in the same pattern as the affected area on the surface.

COMMENTS ON THE DISEASE

Phytophthora fruit rot is caused by *Phytophthora citricola*, the same fungus that causes Phytophthora canker or collar rot. The disease is of minor importance in California, causing the most damage during prolonged wet weather, the same conditions that favor anthracnose. In contrast to anthracnose, which is primarily a postharvest problem, Phytophthora fruit rot affects fruit while it is still hanging on the tree.

COMMENTS ON CONTROL

Because infection is probably caused by the splashing of *Phytophthora* propagules from the soil surface to the fruit during heavy rain, prevention is difficult. Any practice that helps reduce splash, such as a layer of leaves, may help. Fruit lying on the ground should be removed because the fungus can grow and sporulate on them. There are no chemicals labeled for this disease on avocado.

PUBLICATION



UC UC IPM Pest Management Guidelines: Avocado
UC ANR Publication 3436

Diseases

B. A. Faber, UC Cooperative Extension, Santa Barbara/Ventura
counties

L. J. Marais, Plant Pathology, UC Riverside