

# Brown Rot on peach

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FIG. 1

**Disease Pathogen Name:** *Monilinia fructicola*

**Pathogen Type:** Fungus

**Period of Primary Occurrence:** spring

- Symptoms first appear in the spring as blossoms open
- Flowers can be blighted any time floral tissue is exposed but are most susceptible at full bloom
- More spores can be produced on this tissue, initiating additional disease cycles during the spring

## Other Plants Affected

- Peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, and cherries (not grown in the Galveston-Houston area)

## Description / Symptoms

- Brown rot is one of the most important diseases of stone fruits (Fig. 1)
- Diseased flowers wilt, turn brown, and may develop masses of brownish-gray spores (Fig. 7)
- The diseased flowers usually remain attached into the summer (Fig. 2 5)
- Disease develops rapidly on mature fruit and may rot fruit within 48 hours
- Cankers and killed shoots may be colonized by other aggressive canker-causing fungi
- Infected petals may look water soaked, which can be mistaken for frost injury
- Flowers generally collapse as the fungus invades through the pedicel  
Infected flowers often adhere to twigs and spurs through harvest or even winter
- On peaches, the disease spreads into twigs or spurs
- Lesions may remain discrete or may girdle the twig, causing all distal portions to die
- Profuse gumming also may be in these areas
- Fruit symptoms begin as small, dark spots that enlarge rapidly (Fig. 3)
- Production of masses of buff-colored spores is equally rapid in the necrotic area (Fig. 4)



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

- Peaches may have concentric rings of gray sporulation as the rot takes a few days to encompass the entire fruit
- Loss or significant loss of crop may result when disease levels are severe

## Best Management Practices (BMP)

### NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Practice good sanitation — remove all dropped or diseased fruit
- Prune out and remove any cankers and destroy infected twigs and branches
- Remove and destroy all mummified fruit in and around the tree
- Prune to avoid excessive overcrowding of branches to improve air circulation
- Control insects that could wound and injure fruit
- Use moderate amounts of nitrogen fertilizer

### CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Apply fungicides during the blossoming period at early pink bud, full bloom, and/or petal fall to control the blossom blight phase



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Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. If the information does not agree with current labeling, follow the label instructions. The label is the law.

Always remember to read and heed six of the most important words on the label: “KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN”

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