

Fireblight on Pear

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FIG. 1

Disease Pathogen Name: *Erwinia amylovora*

Pathogen Type: Bacterium

Period of Primary Occurrence: early spring

- Early Spring when temperatures are above 60 degrees F and when weather is humid or rainy. Bacteria enter through blossoms, fresh wounds or natural openings

Plants Affected:

- Pear and ornamental plants such as crabapple, pyracantha, hawthorn photinia, quince, loquat, and spirea

Identifying Characteristics

- Blossoms, stems, leaves and fruit can be affected by this disease
- Flowers and branches suddenly turn black and die
- Leaves remain attached to the plant giving it a fire-scorched look

Description / Symptoms

- Disease moves to branches where young twigs blacken and curl looking like a "shepherd's crook"
- Blighted twigs may first appear water soaked
- Sunken areas of cankers appear on branches and main stems
- In wet weather a milky-like, sticky liquid oozes from the infected plant
- Rain and insects like bees, ants, flies, aphids or beetles, which are attracted to the ooze, spread the bacterial
- Delay of fruit bearing in young trees
- Loss of limbs as a result of girdling by blight cankers
- Plants succumb and die



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

Best Management Practices (BMP)

NON CHEMICAL CONTROL

- No cure exists for complete control of fire blight making disease prevention very important
- Plant tolerant or resistant varieties
- Practice good cultural and sanitation measures by removing and destroying all infected plant parts
- Prune 12 – 18" below any sign of infected tissue
- Disinfect all tools between cuts using a solution of 1 part household bleach to 9 parts water
- Avoid excess nitrogen fertilization which results in excess succulent growth, which is easily infected if injured

CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Apply insecticides and bactericides to help reduce disease severity
- Control the insects attracted to the oozing liquid
- To protect bees, do not apply insecticides during bloom

Additional Information:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/homefruit/pear/pear.html>

<http://plantanswers.tamu.edu/fruit/pear.html>



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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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GH-064