

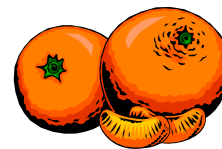


Environmental Horticulture Notes

EHN 12



CONTROL OF CITRUS BLAST AND BROWN ROT OF CITRUS TREES IN THE HOME GARDEN



Citrus Blast and Brown Rot are two diseases that may attack citrus trees during wet weather. The diseases are different but both can be controlled with one spray program.

Citrus Blast is well named, for it makes orange and lemon trees look like they have been exposed to the hot blast of a blow torch. The disease is caused by bacteria that do no harm to people but it kills leaves and twigs of citrus trees. It reduces fruit production and ruins the appearance of the trees in the landscape. It also causes ugly brown spots to appear on the fruit. The disease does not show up every year, but no one has found a way to predict when it will attack. Apparently the bacteria are always around, awaiting the particular combination of weather conditions they like. It is almost sure to strike when heavy rain, high wind, and low temperatures come at the same time. Occasionally, it will ruin an entire tree, but usually the damage is limited to the windward side.

Brown Rot is caused by a fungus during wet weather. It causes the fruit to rot and turn brown, particularly on the lower half of the tree.

Control: Either basic copper or neutral copper are very effective in controlling citrus blast and brown rot if all parts of the tree and the ground beneath the tree are thoroughly coated. The chemical that is selected should be prepared as recommended on the package label.

When to spray: Mid-October, preferably before the rains begin, is the most effective time to spray. A second treatment in mid-December and a third in mid-January is usually beneficial. For best protection, all parts of the trees and the ground beneath the trees must be thoroughly coated with the spray material.

The pebbly texture of mandarin oranges may make it difficult to wash the spray residue off the fruit. If the residue is objectionable, it may be desirable to withhold spraying until after harvest. When this is done, the trees should be sprayed immediately after harvest.

October 1980, revised. Prepared July 1987 by Leland S. Frey, Sacramento County Farm Advisor (Retired) and Gordon W. Morehead, Sacramento County Farm Advisor (Retired).

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