

# PLANT DISEASE CONTROL NOTES

EXTENSION DIVISION • VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

## FRUIT DISEASES

### PEACH SCAB AND ITS CONTROL IN VIRGINIA

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Peach scab caused by the fungus Cladosporium carpophilum is widespread in peach and nectarine growing areas of Virginia. The main loss from the disease is from the unsightly blotches on the fruit, thus reducing its sale value.



*Scab on peaches.*

Peach scab overwinters in lesions on twigs. Primary infection occurs from conidia which are

dispersed to the young fruit and twigs by rain or wind-blown mist after petal-fall. Since the thick mat of epidermal hairs on peach seems to hinder or slow down the fungus, actual infection usually does not occur until 2 to 3 weeks after shuck-fall. Secondary infection may continue throughout the growing season.

The disease first appears on the fruit as small, poorly defined, olivaceous spots less than 1/16" in diameter, usually on the upper exposed surface of the fruit. The spots may be numerous on the upper surface of the fruit, more scattered on the sides, and nearly absent on the protected lower surface. The spots may merge forming a uniform, dark-olivaceous, velvety blotch over the surface of the scabby area. An extra-thick corky layer of cells is produced below the surface of the scabbed area. Since the cork area cannot expand with the growth of the fruit, fissures and/or cracks appear in the fruit providing avenues for brown rot infection.

#### RECOMMENDED CONTROL

##### PEACH:

**CHEMICAL - DRY WETTABLE SULFUR:** Use 6.0 lbs dry wettable sulfur 95% per 100 gals or 6 tablespoons per gallon of spray. Apply 250 to 350 gals per acre or 3 to 5 gals per tree, depending on tree size. Make 3 applications at 10-14

day intervals, starting with the shuck-fall stage of fruit development. In those orchards where scab has been a severe problem, a fourth application should be made 30 days after shuck-fall.

NOTE: In those orchards where dry wettable sulfur is used to control brown rot, no special applications are required for scab control.

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:** Sulfur is relatively safe to handle but may cause irritation to the skin, eyes, and respiratory tract of some individuals.

OR

**CAPTAN:** Use 2.0 lbs. captan 50% WP per 100 gals. or 2 tablespoons per each gallon of spray. Time of application and gallons per acre or tree are the same as for dry wettable sulfur. Captan is less effective for scab control than sulfur. In orchards where scab is a problem, sulfur should be used instead of captan. The residue tolerance for captan is 50 ppm.

OR

**BENOMYL (BENLATE):** Use 0.5 lb Benlate 50% WP per 100 gals. of spray. Make 2 applications of Benlate one at shuck-fall and one 14 days later. The residue tolerance for Benlate is 15 ppm. Do not graze treated areas.

#### NECTARINE:

Use either DRY WETTABLE SULFUR or CAPTAN or BENLATE at the rate and gals. per acre or per tree as described for peach. Apply the spray at shuck-split, shuck-fall, and continue at 7-10 day intervals for 3 sprays. Sulfur is more effective than captan for scab control on nectarine. The residue tolerance for captan is 50 ppm and 15 ppm for benlate.

**ADDITIONAL CONTROL PRACTICES:** Severe scab infection usually results on twigs of young trees in non-bearing and non-sprayed orchards. Thus, abundant inoculum is present to infect the first and second crop of fruit produced by the young trees. Three applications of wettable sulfur on peach and 5 on nectarine as described above, made the year prior to fruiting will greatly reduce the amount of scab on the first and second crops of fruit.

In orchards not protected with pesticides during a non-bearing year (crop killed by freeze, etc.) scab inoculum increases many fold to infect fruit the following year. Wettable sulfur as described above will greatly reduce scab inoculum potential for the following year.

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#### KEYS TO PROPER USE OF PESTICIDES

1. Read the label on each pesticide container before each use. Follow instructions to the letter; heed all cautions and warnings, and note precautions about residues.
2. Keep pesticides in the containers in which you bought them. Put them where children or animals cannot get to them, preferably under lock and away from food, feed, seed, or other material that may become harmful if contaminated.
3. Dispose of empty containers in the manner specified on the label.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR IF SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS OCCUR DURING OR AFTER USE OF PESTICIDES.