



Apple And Pear Scab

Apple Scab (*Venturia inaequalis*) and Pear Scab (*Venturia pirina*) are two of the most troublesome fungal diseases, but because of their similarity are treated in the same way. Scab also known as 'Black Spot' spreads by airborne spores and causes the greatest destruction to the fruit, but also affects the foliage. It can cause lesions and cracking on young shoots thereby increasing the chances of the canker fungus gaining entrance.



DAMAGE

Scab can appear on leaves anytime between spring and autumn and shows as olive green blotches which slowly darken sometimes resulting in premature leaf drop.

On fruit it is first seen as dark spots or blotches consisting of radiating branched lines which later become more corky and greenish in colour. These spots/blotches when produced early often serve as sources for later infection. If young fruits are attacked they may fall early, or if they remain on the tree become misshapen and cracked. Fruits affected later in the season become disfigured. If the attack is only light with just a little damage to the skin the eating quality of the fruit should not be affected too much. Scab may also develop when the fruit is stored.

CONTROL

All varieties of apple and pear may become infected but some are more prone to infection than others. 'Cox's Orange Pippin' and 'Worcester Pearmain' are particularly vulnerable to infection. The degree of infection will depend on the weather conditions at the time of fruit development. Wet cloudy weather during the blossoming period will encourage an outbreak of this disease.

Varieties that show more resistant to scab infection include 'Adam's Pearmain', 'Ashmead's Kernel', 'Beauty of Bath', 'Charles Ross', 'D'Arcy Spice', 'Discovery', 'Ellison's Orange', 'Lord Derby', 'Newton Wonder', 'Rajka', 'Red Devil' and pear 'Beurre Hardy'.

Non chemical Control:

When planting avoid damp, stagnant sites which favour the development of the disease. Trees should be pruned regularly so that they are kept open at the centre. This allows good air circulation and decreases humidity around the foliage, which in turn discourages scab development. Diseased twigs should be cut away and burnt before the buds burst and fallen leaves should be raked up and destroyed in order to prevent the spread of spores that will cause infection the following season.

Companion Planting - Planting clumps of chives around apple trees may help keep them free from scab, however this protection can take three years or more to build and take effect.

Chemical Control:

There are no fungicides currently approved for use by amateur gardeners.

CHEMICALS SAFELY: ALWAYS READ THE LABEL

When using chemicals it is most important to follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely. Only use on the fruits that are listed on the manufacturer's label. Chemicals can be wasted by making concentrations unnecessarily strong or by making them too weak and ineffective. Furthermore, if chemicals are too strong they may cause damage to the foliage.