

Pear Leaf Blister Mite

The pear leaf blister mite is a common pest of pear and occasionally apple. The damage is largely cosmetic and gives the tree an unhealthy appearance but has little effect on its ability to produce fruit.



DAMAGE:

The microscopic gall mite lives within the leaves of pear trees. During May, as it feeds on the foliage, it secretes a chemical causing blistering of the tissue on the new foliage. As the mite gains access to the inside of the leaf, pocket like blisters are formed and breeding occurs within.

In spring, the blisters are evident as soon as the leaves unfurl. They first appear as greenish raised pustules up to 3-4mm in diameter and quickly turn yellow and eventually reddish pink. By mid summer the blisters darken and eventually turn black. Severe attacks can cause premature leaf drop.

CONTROL:

There are no chemicals available to the home gardener that are effective against this pest. If there is a light infestation, affected leaves should be hand picked and destroyed in the summer. If the infestation is heavy, the pest just has to be tolerated as removing the leaves will do more harm than good.