

Walnut Blight

This causes small black spots on the leaflets, leading to large withered areas. It can also cause dieback of the new shoots and damage to the fruits, notably blotches and holes. A large part of the crop is likely to be lost in a serious attack, especially when the male catkins are affected. The disease is most prevalent in periods of cold, wet weather around flowering time. Controlling the disease requires cutting out infected branches to well below the infected area. The prunings should be burned. Preventative measures include guarding against excessive nitrogen feeding, pruning the tree sufficiently to give an open structure for good aeration and avoiding spraying the leaves when watering to reduce the spread of spores through water splash.

Walnut Leaf Blotch

Walnut leaf blotch is a fungal disease that is worse in wet summers and can affect leaves, young shoots and fruits. Leaves develop brown, almost spherical blotches which gradually merge together as the infection continues. Affected leaves may shrivel and fall prematurely. Similar lesions may appear on the fruits, causing them to turn from green to black rendering them inedible. Symptoms usually appear in late May and early June followed by severe leaf drop from around late July.

There is no chemical control for this disease so it is important to ensure that any leaves that have fallen prematurely are collected and burned, together with those that fall naturally in the autumn. This will help reduce the number of spores that over winter.

This disease can severely affect crops and looks unsightly, however has very little long term effect on mature trees. Young trees should be watered well during dry periods and fed in spring to help encourage natural vigour thus making them less susceptible to infection.