

1963

EC63-1835 Plant Diseases : Peach Leaf Curl

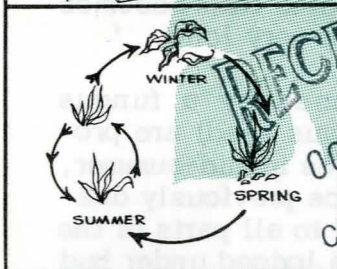
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PLANT DISEASES

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PEACH LEAF CURL

Symptoms: The disease is noticed early in the spring shortly after the leaves have unfolded. Infected leaves become distorted, thickened, puckered, curled, and perhaps reddish in color. All or a portion of the leaves of a tree may be infected. Later the upper surface the leaf turns gray and develops a powdery appearance. During dry weather the infected leaves wither and fall. However, cool weather delays the defoliation of the diseased trees.

Blossoms, twigs and fruit may be attacked by peach leaf curl disease. Infected blossoms quickly fall and



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usually pass unnoticed. The end of an infected twig may enlarge for a length of four or five inches, be shorter than normal and be a rather yellowish color. Such diseased twigs produce only curled leaves. Infected fruit becomes distorted and seldom remains on the tree very long.

Cause: Peach leaf curl is caused by a fungus (Taphrina deformans). The spores (fungus seed) are produced on the surface of the infected leaves in mid-summer, giving the leaves the powdery appearance previously described. Thousands of spores are spread to all parts of the tree by winds and rains. Many become lodged under bud scales and rough bark, where they remain throughout the summer and winter months. In the spring, when the young peach buds begin to swell, germinating spores of the fungus penetrate the young leaves, causing the leaf curl infection. As far as is known, peach leaf curl does not live over from year to year within diseased twigs.

Control: Peach leaf curl is one of the easiest fruit diseases to control. It can be effectively prevented by a single spray application if it is thoroughly applied and done while the tree is dormant, i. e. any time in the fall after the leaves have dropped or in the spring before the buds begin to break.

Following are recommended fungicides:

Fungicide	Amount per water volume		
	1 gal.	10 gal.	100 gal.
Liquid lime-sulfur	1 1/4 cupfuls	12.5 cupfuls	8 gal.
Dry lime-sulfur	1/4 lb.	2.5 lb.	40 lb.
Bordeaux mixture*:			
Copper sulfate	3 tablespoonfuls	2 cups	6 lb.
Hydrated lime	3 tablespoonfuls	2 cups	6 lb.
Ferbam	2 tablespoonfuls	1 1/4 cups	2 lb.

*Dissolve the copper sulfate and hydrated lime in separate containers and then strain into the water. Use while fresh.