

Blossom End Rot (Lycopersicon)



Figure 1 Blossom end rot on tomato



Figure 2 Blossom end rot pepper

Damage

Blossom End Rot is a physiological disorder resulting when calcium uptake is inhibited by low soil moisture or inconsistent watering. Initially a water soaked light tan spot appears at the blossom end of the fruit. The spot may enlarge and darken as the fruit develops, turning dark brown or black and leathery, or it may remain small and superficial. Lesions may provide an entry area for secondary organisms that can cause soft rot and fruit decay.

When It Occurs

Symptoms usually appear when the fruit is growing quickly and is one-third to one-half full size.

Susceptible Plants

Tomatoes (especially Roma tomatoes) are very susceptible to blossom end rot. Peppers, eggplant and squash (zucchini) can also be affected.

Prevention Methods

You can reduce the incidence of blossom end rot by providing timely irrigation, mulching to conserve soil moisture, and avoiding excessive nitrogen fertilizer applications. Plants should receive one inch of water per week. Irrigate evenly every five to ten days, depending on the soil type and frequency of rain. Avoid conditions of too much or too little water.

Treatment Methods

Since Blossom End Rot is a physiological problem, fungicides and insecticides are useless as control measures. Consistent watering is the best way to address the problem.

Additional Information/Resources

- UW Extension Bulletin [A3687 Growing Tomatoes, Peppers, and Eggplants in Wisconsin](#)
- UW Extension Bulletin [A3798 Tomato Disorder: Physiological Fruit Problems](#)
- UW Extension Garden Fact Sheet [Blossom End Rot XHT1140](#)
- Cornell University [Blossom End Rot of Tomato](#)
- Dane County UW Extension Horticulture Hotline 608-224-3721 (M-F, 9am-12 noon, April 15-October 31) or horticulture@countyofdane.com