



PEACH LEAF CURL

CAUSE

Peach leaf curl is caused by *Taphrina deformans*, a fungal disease. Spores overwinter on bark, twigs and old infected leaves. Trees are infected in late winter or early spring just as buds begin to swell. In addition to peaches, nectarines and almonds are also affected.

DAMAGE

The disease mainly affects foliage: leaves become thickened, curled and crinkled. They also discolor to yellow, pink, red or purple colors. Some of the infected leaves drop but many stay on the tree, later becoming gray and powdery. Diseased fruits may have irregular swollen reddish areas on their surface. Defoliation resulting from severe infections can weaken the trees to the point that, if not controlled, the trees may die within 2 to 3 years. In eastern Washington, after initial spring infection and shedding of diseased leaves, no further damage may be apparent.

CONTROL

Plant resistant varieties. Rake and burn or bag infected leaves. **Do not compost.** Chemical sprays will not treat already infected buds. Treatment must be applied as a preventative during dormant season just before buds swell. In eastern Washington a single dormant spray in February, with any of the following fungicides, will control peach leaf curl.

1. Fixed copper fungicides
2. Lime sulfur
3. Chlorothalonil (Daconil 2787)

Compiled by Levi Strauss. For more information, contact Master Gardeners at (509) 477-2181.

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