

Brown rot (*Monilinia fruticola*) is a common and destructive disease of stone fruits (peach, plum, cherry, apricot).

Appearance:

- Diseased flowers wilt, turn brown, and may become covered with masses of brownish-gray spores.
- Fruit infections appear as soft brown spots which rapidly expand and produce a tan powdery mass of conidia.
- The entire fruit rots rapidly, then dries and shrinks into a wrinkled “mummy.”



Apple Damage (Patrick L. Byers)



Plum Damage (Patrick L. Byers)



Cherry Damage
(G. Holmes, Strawberry Ctr., Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org)

Timing:

- Symptoms first appear in the spring as the blossoms open.
- Young fruits are normally resistant, but may become infected through wounds.
- As fruits mature they become more susceptible to attack, even in the absence of wounds.

Damage:

- Blossoms are destroyed, reducing fruit crops
- Fruit rots may destroy entire fruit crops.

Treatment:

- Prune and thin for good air circulation
- Sanitation! Remove any rotting fruit and mummies from the site.
- Apply Serenade Fungicide at bud break.
- Spray Neem and fermented teas in the fall on the tree and ground to destroy spores.

Resources: Patrick L. Byers, Horticulture Specialist and Michael Phillips, "The Holistic Orchard".