

Hotline Question 2/16/16

A lot of leaves on my avocado tree have turned brown on the ends. Some leaves have fallen from the tree and it is not as full as it used to be. Is this a disease? What can I do?



- Request background information: location in county, type of soil, tree age, how is it watered, fertilized, etc. Any sign of gophers or other pests.



- Tip burn on leaves can be caused by high soil salinity (total salts), or an excessive amount of sodium or chloride in the soil. The soil may have poor drainage or there may be improper irrigation (frequency, amount, and periodic leaching), fertilizer injury (too much or use of manure – high in salts), root damage by gophers or disease.

- Leaf drop may be caused by excessive salt burn on foliage or water stress (dry soil or hot/windy weather) or root damage by pests, gophers, or disease.



- Avocados are very susceptible to avocado root rot and some other soil borne fungal diseases. Infected roots do not absorb enough water, especially during hot weather. Root samples and some soil can be submitted to the county ag department for diagnosis.



- Refer person to Avocado Production in Home Gardens by Gary Bender on MG website (under Resources – Plant Growing Guides) and UC Pest Notes (phytophthora, pocket gophers).

<http://www.mastergardenersd.org/downloads/Avocado%20Production%20in%20Home%20Gardens.pdf>

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Avocado
Avocado Root Rot (Phytophthora Root Rot)
Pathogen: *Phytophthora cinnamomi*
 (Reviewed 1/07, updated 8/08, pesticides updated 5/15)

In this Guideline:

- [Symptoms](#)
- [Comments on the disease](#)
- [Management](#)
- [Important links](#)
- [Publication](#)
- [Glossary](#)

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS
 Foliar symptoms of avocado root rot include small, pale green or yellowish leaves. [Leaves](#) often wilt and have brown, necrotic tips. Foliage is sparse and new growth is rare. There may be little leaf litter under infected trees. Small branches die back in the tree top, exposing other branches and fruit to sunburn because of the lack of shading foliage. Fruit production declines, but diseased trees frequently set a heavy crop of small fruit.



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