



DISORDERS OF PEPPER: Blossom End Rot (BER)



SYMPTOMS:

- Sunken, collapsed tissue near the blossom end of the pepper fruit.
- Often forms on or between lobes and can occur on sidewalls.
- Quickly invaded by bacteria and fungi that can lead to further decay.

CAUSES:

- Lack of calcium in the soil has an important role in causing BER.
- BER is most often associated with inadequate soil moisture content.

PREVENTION:

- Maintain adequate irrigation, especially during periods of hot, dry, and windy weather.
- Test soil for calcium levels before planting and if needed add lime or dolomite prior to preparing plant beds.
- Applying calcium products to the foliage probably won't help.

PHOTOS:

Figure 1. Isolated areas of collapsed tissue beginning to coalesce into larger and more obvious symptoms of BER. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 2. Mild and severe symptoms of BER on blossom end of two peppers. Discolored tissue around injury due to accelerated ripening in response to injury. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 3. Later stage of BER on immature green pepper. Collapsed tissue of BER injury has dried. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 4. Later stage of BER on yellow-mature pepper. Collapsed tissue of BER injury has dried. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.



Prepared by: Dr. Kent Cushman

DISORDERS OF PEPPER: Sunscauld



SYMPTOMS:

- Discolored or bleached areas on fruit in areas directly exposed to the sun.
- Sunken, collapsed tissue.

CAUSES:

- Direct sunlight on the fruit.
- Inadequate foliage growth to cover and protect fruit.

PREVENTION:

- Provide adequate irrigation and fertilization to produce a strong plant with adequate foliage.
- Grow two rows of peppers about 12 inches apart. Rows will grow together and protect fruits.

PHOTOS:

Figure 1. Discolored pepper tissue indicating stress from too much sun. Also some tissue already damaged and dried out. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 2. Discolored and soft tissue of exposed fruit. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 3. Severe sunscald showing bleached and soft tissue that hasn't yet begun to dry out. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.

Figure 4. Discolored and bleached tissue of exposed fruit. Collapsed tissue of sunscald injury has begun to dry and heal over. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.





DISORDERS OF PEPPER: Misshapen Fruit



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Kent Cushman
Vegetable Specialist
UF/IFAS SWFREC
2686 SR 29 N
Immokalee FL 34142-9515
kcushman@ufl.edu
239-658-3429

SYMPTOMS:

- Misshapen fruit.

CAUSES:

- Physical barriers encountered by pepper fruit during expansion.
- Irregular, uneven growth during expansion.

PREVENTION:

- None. A low percentage of fruit will always become wedged between stems, stakes, and/or twine.

PHOTO:

Figure 1. Misshapen fruit that formed within a pepper plant canopy and became wedged between two branches. As the fruit expanded, it became increasingly deformed. This fruit also has an abnormal growth protruding from where the stem attached to the fruit. This was not caused by the deformation, but this occurs in a low percentage of fruit and is a normal physiological defect. Small physiological errors in how the fruit expands can lead to large changes in fruit shape and oddly shaped peppers. Photograph by: Kent Cushman.



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