DISEASE MANAGEMENT:
Wet Rot, Choanephora blight

**Choanephora cucurbitarum**

**SIGNS & SYMPTOMS:**
- Water soaked lesions appear on the leaves and the margins and leaf tips are blighted.
- Older lesions turn necrotic and appear dried out.
- The entire plant may wilt.
- Flowers and flower buds turn dark and wilt.
- Young fruit can be infected.

**DISEASE CYCLE & EPIDEMIOLOGY:**
- This disease is not common on pepper plants in Florida.
- The fungus has a wide host range such as yellow squash and some common weeds.
- Outbreaks of this disease occur during extended rainy periods and high temperatures.

**FIELD SIGNATURE:**
- ‘Whiskers’ of the fungus, which are fungal strands, with dark-colored, knobby sporangiola, can be seen with a hand lens.
- Morning is the best time to look for the fungus.
- Symptoms may be confused with Phytophthora blight (*Phytophthora capsici*).

**PHOTOS:**

**Figure 1.** Silvery whiskers grow out of infected areas, topped with black spore masses. Courtesy of: AVRDC.

**Figure 2.** Most of the time, it seems to start in senescing flower petals. Once established, entire flowers are overgrown, resulting in a brown to black mass of soft tissue. Flower stalks, buds, and leaves may subsequently be invaded. Photograph by: UF/IFAS.

**Figure 3.** Close-up of sporulating fungus on leaf surface. Photograph by: UF/IFAS.

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**CULTURAL CONTROLS:**

- Any method which increases air movement in the crop canopy to reduce the humidity may aid in management. Examples include:
  - Increase plant spacing
  - Adequate drainage
  - Avoid overhead irrigation
  - Avoid excess nutrition which creates a dense canopy

**RESISTANT CULTIVARS:**

- There are no resistant cultivars for tomatoes or peppers.

**CHEMICAL CONTROL:**

- There are no fungicides labeled for this disease. Sprays for other fungal diseases may reduce disease damage.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**Figure 4.** Symptoms of *Choanephora* blight on pepper showing tip die-back. Courtesy of: UF/IFAS.

**References:**

*Choanephora* Blight (Wet Rot), pp. 11-12.  
American Phytopathological Society Press, St. Paul, MN.