

TOMATO BLOSSOM END ROT



CARE & MAINTENANCE

Blossom End Rot is an environmental disease caused by **improper watering** or by a **calcium deficiency** when fruit is forming. The disease can be caused by several other factors as well. It most often occurs when plants are grown under favorable conditions in the early part of the season and are then subjected to a long period of drought while the fruit is in the early stages of development. Under such circumstances, the cells at the end of the blossom fail to receive sufficient water to grow. Blossom End Rot can also occur after a period of heavy rain, because many small rootlets die from lack of aeration in the soil. Overdoses of nitrogen hinder the uptake of calcium, a situation which aggravates the problem. Blossom End Rot could also be caused by excessive root pruning, which results from heavy cultivation near the plants.

Most Obvious Symptoms

Pepper – Light-colored, sunken, water-soaked spot near the blossom end of the fruit. A third of the fruit may become shriveled.

Tomato – Sunken, dry, brown to black leathery spot develops near the blossom end of tomatoes.



TIPS & TRICKS

Control Strategy Water plants evenly (consistently) and only as needed. Check the pH of the soil: It should be between 6.0 and 7.0. If it's below 6.0, add horticultural lime, which contains calcium. Also calcium containing sprays such as **Rot-Stop** from **Bonide** could be used to treat the plants.

Prevention Avoid adding surplus nitrogen, and be sure to apply ample amounts of phosphorus and horticultural lime. Water plants consistently and evenly throughout the season. Cultivate the soil as little as possible in dry weather to avoid further drying of the soil, and be careful not to damage roots during cultivation. Test for and correct calcium deficiency.



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