

Choanephora rot of vegetables

Rotting, mushy cucumber, squash, pumpkin, eggplant, or chili peppers can be a symptom of a common fungal disease called Choanephora rot. It first appears on dying blossoms that are still attached to fruits. The disease then spreads to the fruit (usually appears first at the blossom-end but may also appear at the stem end). Affected fruit parts turn dark brown to black and then become fuzzy and mushy. Thousands of tiny black dots can be seen with a hand lens on infected fruit. The disease is more noticeable when the weather is warm, humid, and rainy. The pathogen overwinters on dead plants and in soil and is spread to squash blossoms by bees, cucumber beetles, and splashing water.

No fungicides are labeled for control. Improve air circulation by proper plant spacing. Remove the infected fruit from the field immediately to reduce the spread.



Figure. Choanephora fruit rot infection caused by *Choanephora cucurbitarum*. Photo by Michael Williams, Bishop Orchards, Guilford, CT.

Bacterial bulb rot in onions

With the growing season being wetter than normal, it is likely that bacterial diseases can infect onions. Bacteria enter the bulb through wounds and dying lower leaves. The pathogens are soilborne and may spread through irrigation water or splashing water

from rain or irrigation. Most of these pathogens are favored by warm temperatures (over 85°F) and wet conditions.

Foliar symptoms of bacterial diseases include collapse of one or more inner leaves.

[Video on how to diagnose onion bacterial bulb rot.](#)

[In research trials](#), topping onion necks to a length of 1 inch resulted in 4 to 5 times more internal bulb rot (19%) than onions that were clipped to a 3-inch or 5-inch neck length (4.0-4.5% bulb rot incidence). Pulling the onions early and rapidly curing them in 3-5 days can reduce the bulb infection.

Phytophthora blight on pumpkins and winter squash

It is bad year for phytophthora blight as well. If you have *P. capsici* in your winter squash or pumpkin plantings, hold your produce at least 3 days post-harvest to allow symptoms to begin to manifest before packing. And, don't introduce the infected fruit to the new field.

Sweet corn pests

Corn earworm numbers are up again from last week, while European corn borer and fall armyworm trap counts remain low in the region. Trap counts at a farm in Berlin was 4 CEW moths per night keeping them on a 4-day spray schedule.

Continue to be on the lookout for the following pests that were covered in [the previous pest alerts \(2023\)](#):

- Cucurbit powdery mildew
- Cucurbit downy mildew
- Allium leafminer
- Phytophthora blight, root rot and crown rot
- Bacterial canker of tomatoes
- Alternaria leaf spot on brassica crops
- Cross-striped cabbageworm
- Early blight and Septoria leaf spots on tomato
- Pepper and tomato anthracnose
- Verticillium wilt in eggplant and tomatoes

This report is prepared by Shuresh Ghimire, UConn Extension. All photos in this publication are credited to Shuresh Ghimire unless otherwise noted.

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