



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Onion smudge (186)



Photo 1. Spots over an onion bulb caused by smudge, *Colletotrichum circinans*.



Photo 2. Onion smudge, *Colletotrichum circinans*, in diffuse patches at the base of the bulb.



Photo 3. Stiff long hairs within the spore masses of the smudge fungus, *Colletotrichum circinans*; they can be seen with a hand lens.

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On onion, leek, Welsh onion (Japanese bunching onion), Chinese chive, shallot. A cosmetic disease.
- On the lower parts of the outer leaves and neck, in patches or rings.
- Spore masses with long stiff hairs. Spots on leaves turn to blights under wet warm conditions.
- More serious rots occur if onions harvested wet and stored moist >20°C.
- Causes a seedling damping-off.
- Spread occurs in wind-driven rain.
- Cultural control: well-drained soil; clean seed and healthy transplants; avoid harvesting in wet weather; cure bulbs quickly and store cool and dry; plant those with coloured outer scales; 2-3-year crop rotations.
- Chemical control: possibly, mancozeb, or chlorthalonil.

Common Name

Smudge of onion bulbs, anthracnose of onions

Scientific Name

Colletotrichum circinans

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Photo 1 Gerald Holmes, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org Photo 2 *Diseases of vegetable crops in Australia* (2010). Editors, Denis Persley, Tony Cooke, Susan House. CSIRO Publishing. Photo 3 Cesar Calderon, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

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