



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Sweetpotato black rot (232)



Photo 1. Large, sunken, circular spots on a sweetpotato storage root caused by black rot, *Ceratocystis fimbriata*.



Photo 2. As in Photo 1, sunken, circular spots on a sweetpotato storage root caused by black rot, *Ceratocystis fimbriata*. The white cottony growth of the fungus can be seen on some of the spots.



Photo 3. Long black spots mostly on the underground parts of sweetpotato vines caused by black rot, *Ceratocystis fimbriata*.

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In tropical, sub-tropical and temperate countries. A wound fungus with many hosts, coffee, cocoa, mango, pineapple, sugarcane, taro. Many strains.
- Spots on the storage roots, and on the stems below ground. Survives as spores in the soil, and as fungus in roots.
- Spread in wind and also by insects – has fruity smell, and spores are sticky. Beetles take spores to wounds.
- Cultural control: if using a nursery to raise cuttings, site nursery on 'new' land; start with 'clean' tip cuttings for planting; avoid wounding storage roots; at harvest, collect trash and burn; avoid (i) packaging and storing crops with signs of the rot, (ii) or storing roots when they are wet; 3-4-year rotations.
- Chemical control: dip storage roots in thiabendazole.

Common Name

Black rot

Scientific Name

Ceratocystis fimbriata; the asexual state is *Chalara* species.

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Photo 1 Gerald Holmes, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org. Photo 2 Charles Averre, North Carolina State University, Bugwood.org. Photo 3 *Compendium of SweetPotato Diseases* (1988). American Phytopathological Society.

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The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

