

Potato soft rot (296)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On potato, brassicas, capsicum, carrot, aroids, ornamentals and more. Important bacterial diseases.
- Three kinds: (i) soft rots in seed, brown with black margin, (ii) stem rots (uncommon); (iii) wet rots in storage. Spread in ground water, and trade in tubers.
- Cultural control: certified seed; treat cutting tools (bleach); field drainage; avoid excessive N; avoid irrigation until emergence; avoid harvest when wet, and avoid wounds; harvest 7-10 days after vine are dead; avoid washing tubers before storage; store at 12-15°C for 1-2 weeks, and then at 10°C.
- Chemical control: none recommended.

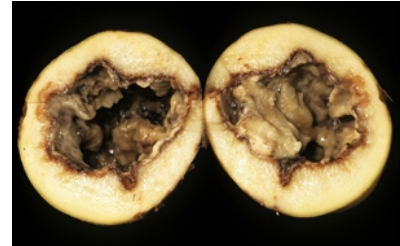


Photo 1. Bacterial soft rot of potato, caused by *Pectobacterium carotovora* subsp. *carotovora*.

Common Name

Bacterial soft rot

Scientific Name

Pectobacterium carotovorum subsp. *carotovorum* (previously, *Erwinia carotovora* subsp. *carotovora*). There are other, related, bacteria species causing stem and tuber rots in potato, most importantly 'black leg' caused by *Pectobacterium atrosepticum*, and *Erwinia chrysanthemi* (renamed *Dickeya chrysanthemi*) causing tuber rots, particularly in tropical countries (see **Fact Sheet no. 179**).

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Information from *Diseases of vegetable crops in Australia* (2010). Editors, Denis Persley, et al. CSIRO Publishing; and DPI&RD (2017) Soft rot diseases of potatoes. Agriculture and Food. Government of Western Australia. (<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/potatoes/soft-rot-diseases-potatoes>); and Reviewing best practices for potato soft rot and blackleg (2019) AUSVEG. (<https://ausveg.com.au/articles/reviewing-best-practice-for-potato-soft-rot-and-blackleg/>); and from Charkowski A et al. (2020) Bacterial diseases of potato. In: Campos H, Ortiz, O (eds.), The potato crop. (<https://www.potatopro.com/sites/default/files/potato-crop-book-chapter-10-bacterial-diseases-of-potato.pdf>). Photo 1 Gerald Holmes, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org.

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