

Cocoa pink disease (012)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In the tropics. Many trees are hosts, cocoa, *Agathis* (kauri), citrus, coffee, *Cordia*, *Hibiscus*, mango, and many other trees. Usually, a minor disease, unless maintenance is poor.
- White at first, as pustules develop through cracks and natural openings, then pink as spores form. Cankers develop and leaves die and hang down. Spores spread in wind and rain. They can infect through bark.
- Cultural control: use fertile soils and provide adequate nutrition; space trees >3m to aid air circulation; prune infected branches (in dry weather), and cut below the *lorquette* (top of the trunk where branches develop) allowing regrowth; avoid heavy shade.
- Chemical control: collect and burn pruned branches; apply copper fungicide as a paste to cut end.

Common Name

Pink disease of cocoa

Scientific Name

Erythricum salmonicolor; also known by older names, *Phanerochaete salmonicolor*, and *Corticium salmonicolor*.

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Information from CABI (2019) *Erythricum salmonicolor* (pink disease). Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/15454>). Photo 3 Kohler F, et al (1997) *Diseases of cultivated crops in Pacific Island countries*. South Pacific Commission. Pirie Printers Pty Limited, Canberra, Australia.

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project PC/2010/090: *Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production*, implemented by the University of Queensland and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.



Photo 1. Pink disease, *Phanerochaete salmonicolor*, at the *lorquette* of a young cocoa tree.



Photo 2. Pink disease of cocoa, *Phanerochaete salmonicolor*, has killed the branches, but the leaves still remain attached. (Pink disease is present on the central branch where it shows as a lighter colour.)



Photo 3. Pink disease, *Phanerochaete salmonicolor*, on coffee; as the fungus kills the branch, the surface layers dry out and crack. Similar symptoms occur on cocoa.

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