

Cocoa sunscald & cherelle wilt (137)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Natural processes occurring on cocoa, not diseases.
- Sunscald – Either cocoa is grown without shade, or shade is removed and soil nutrients not sufficient to support healthy growth. Top leaves yellow, fall, and young stems dieback. Lower shoots develop.
- Cherelle wilt – Young pods, 6-8 cm, first red or green, stop growing, lose colour and decay, turning black, but remaining attached. Although a natural process, it can be increased by *Phytophthora* black pod rot.
- Cultural control: important factors are: spacing; a light shade preferably from a tree in the legume family, moist soils (not too wet or dry); mulch; control of black pod.
- Chemical control: none recommended.

Common Name

Cocoa sunscald & cherelle wilt. 'Cherelles' are young pods that wilt during the first 6-8 weeks after pollination, when less than 10 cm long.

Scientific Name

There are no scientific name for these physiological conditions: i) reaction of trees to lack of shade, and sun damage, and ii) early death of cherelles by a natural fruit-thinning process.



Photo 1. Branch dieback and yellowing of the leaves due to sunscald of cocoa caused by exposure - lack of shade - and poor nutrition.



Photo 2. Severe branch dieback due to lack of shade and adequate nutrition.

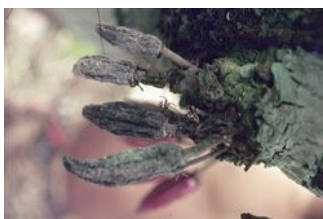


Photo 4. Cherelles or young cocoa pods have 'wilted' naturally, died, and blackened due to infection by fungi and other decay-causing organisms.

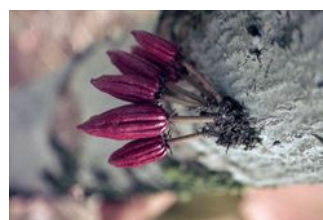


Photo 3. Healthy young pods, or cherelles, before wilting.

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Information from (including Photos 3&4) Gerlach WWP (1988) *Plant diseases of Western Samoa*. Samoan German Crop Protection Project, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Germany. Photo 1 Pita Tikai, ACIAR ICM/IPM project, Solomon Islands.

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.

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