

BLACK DOT (*Colletotrichum coccodes*)

Black dot of potatoes is caused by *Colletotrichum coccodes*. Diseased tubers may not be certified as limited infection is allowed on certified seed. Moisture losses can also occur which may result in poor quality seed. Black dot also spoil the appearance of potato tubers resulted in downgrading of consignments destined for the consumer market tubers.

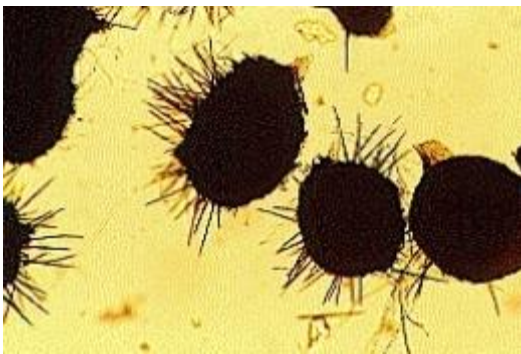
Disease symptoms



This disease is characterised by the appearance of black dots (microsclerotia) at the end of the season on tubers, stolons, roots and stems both above and below ground.

The disease usually does not have a severe effect on the growth and development of the plant. Early senescence is possible when other diseases (e.g. Verticillium wilt are also present).

The symptoms on the tuber resemble those of silver scurf. Black dot can be distinguished from silver scurf by the presence of microsclerotia on the black dot lesions.



Tiny black dots (microsclerotia) can be seen when looking at the spots with a magnifying glass. These microsclerotia are absent in the case of silver scurf.

Black dot can originate from inoculum on seed or from microsclerotia occurring either free or on colonised plant debris in soil.

Optimal conditions for disease

Infected seed potatoes are the most important source of infection although the pathogen can also survive in the soil by means of microsclerotia. Plants which have matured naturally and also plants that are under stress caused by infection with other wilt diseases, excessive water, extreme heat or cold, are particularly susceptible for infection. Tuber infection can take place any time during the growing season, especially at the end of the season. Tubers may be infected at lifting without showing any symptoms of black dot, with symptom development during storage. Infection can also take place for the first time during storage.

Other Hosts

Solanaceae for example: tomatoes & eggplant

Cucurbitaceae for example: pumpkins

Several weeds, such as: thorn apple

When above mentioned crops are used in rotation the inoculum in the soil will persist.