

Common Apple Diseases

Symptoms and Control



Apple Tree Diseases

Apple trees can be infected with several diseases. Two of the most common is Apple Scab and Cedar Apple Rust. What are these diseases and how do you prevent them?

Apple Scab

What it is? Apple Scab is by far the most common apple disease in South Dakota. The disease spores will overwinter in leaf debris and branches that were infected the year before. In the spring the spores will be released to infect new leaves. Typically, you will see greenish black lesions on the underside of the leaf, which will eventually if bad enough cause the leaf to turn yellow with the brown spots. Leaf drop prematurely throughout the summer is typical. The best way to control apple scab is to pick up and dispose of all leaves at leaf drop.

How do you control it? Apply *Fertilome Broad Spectrum Fungicide* or *Copper Fungicide* for a total of 5 applications. First application is applied when leaf buds are starting to crack open (the most important application), then apply every 10-14 days, do not apply when flowering as it will affect bee pollination.



Photo credit: OSU Extension



Photo Credit: NC Extension

Apple Cedar Rust

What it is? Cedar Apple Rust needs 2 hosts to be problematic. The disease will overwinter as brown galls on cedar trees. In the spring the gall will turn orange with protrusion where the disease spore will be released. At that point it will infect Apple, Crabapple and Hawthorne. Orange spots will form on infected leaves with lesions forming. Swollen cankers often form on the underside of leaves as mid-summer approaches, and lesions may appear on the fruit.

How do you control it? The most effective fungicide for cedar apple rust that is *Immunox*. Apply this product to susceptible varieties at leaf bud crack, and then every 10-14 days after. Do not apply at the time of flower bloom as this will affect bee pollination. Planting resistant varieties will be beneficial when expecting usable fruit regularly.