



Conifer Diseases

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Cedar Apple Rust

This disease is very common on juniper or cedar trees in Oklahoma. The most striking feature of this disease is the gall that appears on the cedar in the spring. Long, orange, gelatinous tendrils or horns develop from these galls and homeowners can easily recognize these structures and know that this disease is active. These galls can be pruned by the homeowner before the horns are formed to achieve control of this disease. For more information concerning this disease refer to OSU Extension Facts F-7611, Cedar Apple Rust.

Phomopsis Blight of Junipers

This is the most common disease of cedar, juniper, and arborvitae in Oklahoma. Phomopsis Blight can be a severe problem in nursery plantings and can cause the death of many seedlings. Older trees are less affected by Phomopsis Blight and unless these trees are environmentally stressed or in poor health they are usually not affected enough to warrant chemical sprays.

Symptoms and Disease Cycle

Infected trees will exhibit browning of the foliage and dying of twigs and branches. Small black fruiting bodies of the fungus, *Phomopsis juniperovora*, are formed on this dead tissue. Conidia are produced in these structures and when moisture is present masses of conidia will ooze out to form tendrils or horns. The conidia are spread by rain and various other means such as mechanical disruption and insects. The fungus enters the plant through wounds as well as unbroken tissue. The browning of the needles and twigs begins at the tips and progresses downward toward the stem. Moisture is an important factor in disease spread and severity. Nurseries and Christmas tree plantations that utilize over head irrigation usually have more severe disease problems because wetting of the foliage results in earlier spread of the conidia.

Control

Good sanitation is important in reducing disease occurrence. Clean cultivation, good drainage and roguing (removing affected plants or plant parts) are important techniques that should be followed. Fungicides are usually applied as protectants and a regular schedule of fungicide sprays must be applied to prevent the penetration of the fungus into the plants. Homeowners are encouraged to use at least two sprays, once when the disease is first noticed and another 10 to 14 days later. For best control, infected twigs should be pruned prior to the application of the fungicide.