



DOVE
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Pear leaf blister mite

Pear leaf blister mite (*Phytoptus pyri*) is a widespread and often common pest on pears but can sometimes attack apples too. The female of the species is about 0.2mm in length with a long, narrow white/pale brown body.

Lifecycle

The adults of both sexes usually overwinter beneath the outer bud scales and become active in the early spring when the buds then start to swell. At this time they burrow deeper into the buds and start to feed and lay eggs at the base of the inner scales of the bud. The adults also feed on other parts of the tree including the young leaves and developing flower buds. As with most mites, populations can be found on the underside of the leaves which shelter them from sun and rain. However, as the leaves succumb to the attack some of the cells collapse under the blisters formed as a result of the feeding and they enter through these damaged areas. Small galls are formed where the mites continue to breed throughout the summer. As new mites emerge, so more blisters are formed that then develop into galls. As the days shorten, the mites then progress to the bud scales again for the winter.

Damage

The galls can be seen as early as when the leaves start to unfurl. The galls are like green pimples which can change to yellow as the season progresses. Some produce a red colouring which can be seen on the leaf surface. Usually the galls are along the main vein but can spread as populations increase. Mites can be transported easily on the wind and on clothing. Leaves severely infested can turn brown and crop off.

Control

Make sure plants are not water stressed. Physical removal of affected leaves by leaving the petiole on the branches can reduce pest pressure. The following products may have some effect on blister mites and can be used on pear trees (check individual labels for harvest intervals and spray timing information) but do not have specific label recommendations for the control of blister mites.

Retail products available for use on pear trees in 2014:

- Fatty acids: Doff Universal Bug Killer and others
- Lambda-cyhalothrin: Westland Resolva Bug Killer RTU

Commercial products available for use on pear trees in 2014:

- Deltamethrin: Decis and others
- Chlorpyrifos: Equity and others
- Fatty acids: Savona and others
- Lambda-cyhalothrin: Hallmark WZT and others

Use plant protection products safely. Always read the label and product information before use

Dove Associates shall in no event be liable for any loss or damage caused by the use of products mentioned in this document

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