Baker County Extension
Alicia R. Lamborn
Environmental Horticulture Agent
1025 West Macclenny Avenue
Macclenny, FL 32063
904-259-3520 email: alamborn@ufl.edu
http://baker.ifas.ufl.edu

Cedar-Quince Rust on Pear

If all of your little developing pears look like they are sprouting orange hair, then unfortunately your pear tree is infected with a fungal disease called Cedar-Quince Rust. The disease occurs on a wide range of plants related to pear like apple, quince, and crab apple, as well as evergreens like cedars and junipers. In order for the fungus to survive, it must move from an evergreen host like a cedar to a deciduous host, in your case, a pear tree. Although black spots develop on the plant within days of infection, orange tubes called aecia won't develop for weeks after infection. Next, spores are released from the aecia located on the fruit tree and travel by wind to infect new cedar plants. The infected cedars will not show symptoms until the next growing season but they can manifest as galls or orange ooze present under bark. If you have cedar trees, look for an orange jelly-like growth which is the most obvious stage of the fungus.

This fungus can infect the leaves, young branches and fruits of a pear tree, but most people only notice symptoms on the small, developing pears. While the fruit is ruined for this year, you should attempt to remove as many infected twigs and fruit as possible, removing infected plant material completely from the area. When it comes to management of this disease, you can avoid planting pears around cedar trees and vice versa. However, cutting down all the cedar trees in your neighborhood is not a recommended control measure. For recurring problems (year-after-year infections), there are several fungicide chemicals that can be applied in early spring. When the blossoms of the trees are swelling you can apply a preventative fungicidal spray containing sulfur, captan, cholorothalonil, or mancozeb. While fungicidal sprays do not cure existing conditions, they can be useful for preventing infection. Please read all pesticide labels before application, since there are pre-harvest limitations for some products.

Photo and article adapted and excerpted from: Wilber, W. (2004). Weekly Home Horticulture Column, June/July 2004. U/F IFAS Extension Alachua County http://alachua.ifas.ufl.edu/lawn_and_garden