

## Blossom end rot in tomatoes

(Physiological disorder)



Round –brown water-soaked spots on the Blossom end of the fruit. (Photo: Flickr user CavinB)



Dark brown sunken spot on the blossom end of an affected crop. (Photo by [www.esbenshades.com](http://www.esbenshades.com))

Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Test your soil for calcium levels 1-2 months before planting</li> <li>◆ Water regularly at least three times per week to ensure an adequate amount of moisture.</li> <li>◆ Mulch using maize stover, wheat straw or dried grass to conserve soil moisture</li> <li>◆ Harden seedlings for 2 weeks before transplanting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Look for:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Small water-soaked sunken spots at the blossom ends of the fruits which enlarge and darken as the fruits mature</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Carry out soil analysis annually to determine calcium levels in Certified Laboratories such as KALRO.</li> <li>◆ Test the soil moisture by picking and pressing soil between the fingers. If the soil particles do not stick to each other, it shows the soil is dry, initiate direct control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Boost calcium levels in the soil by adding crushed egg shells (12g of egg-shells/plant), bone meal (250g/hill) in the planting hole</li> <li>◆ Regularly water the crop to ensure adequate moisture for steady growth</li> <li>◆ Remove fruits that have this disorder to avoid secondary infections</li> <li>◆ Enrich soil with organic matter or use mulch to retain moisture especially during the flowering and fruiting stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Liming with calcium carbonate at 150 g per m<sup>2</sup> once after every 3 years is important</li> <li>◆ Top-dress with calcium ammonium nitrate (26%N) at knee high at a rate of 40kg/acre then at flowering 80kg/acre. Ensure adequate soil moisture during application</li> <li>◆ Spray with calcium nitrate or calcium chloride at 30g in 20 litres of water every 7-10 days until 3- 4 applications prior to onset of symptoms when fruits are about 2cm in diameter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ When applying fertilizers always wear protective clothing</li> <li>◆ Follow instructions on the label such as dosage, timing of application and maximum number of applications</li> <li>◆ Dispose of excess fertilizer properly to avoid aquatic contamination</li> </ul>



Kenya

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