



“What’s wrong with my vegetable plant?”

A guide to many vegetable garden plant disorders

Colorado State University Extension

Plants succumb to many different problems while we grow them in our gardens. They may get problems that have a biotic (living) origin, such as a virus, bacterial infection, fungal infection etc. However, it’s equally common that the problem is abiotic (non-living) in origin, these can include fertilization issues, moisture issues, environment (heat, cold etc.), complications with the soil etc.



This guide is designed to help walk you through where you’re seeing your problem and figuring out what might be causing the issue. Once you know the issue you can click through to one of our videos on the topic and find out more, including what you can do to resolve the issue whether it be this year or next. Happy sleuthing!

We have divided this guide into plant families, a plant family is a group of plant with similar growth habits and characteristics. Most members of the family are susceptible to similar growing issues. As you determine what family your plant is you can then ask where you’re seeing symptoms. This guide has divided symptoms into four main categories: stems, fruit/flower, leaves, and roots.

This guide goes over the most common plant families found in the vegetable garden. There are many more, if you have questions, you can reference our Colorado Vegetable guide: <https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/colorado-vegetable-guide/>. This will provide more information on certain plant topics and specific plant varieties. Please also reach out to your local county extension office.

Scroll down to see photos and descriptions of many of the most prevalent diseases and disorders of vegetables in Colorado home gardens.

Legumes: peas, beans (both snap and dry)

Stem/plant	
<p>Baldheading -Seedlings are stunted with little growth above first leaves, typically due to damage of the growing point. Sprouting issues For more information: https://youtu.be/-fdMHA97vNM</p>	 <p>Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org</p>
<p>Rust - May start with yellow or white raised spots on leaves or stem. Infected plants may look scorched from the sun. May have a yellow halo. In severe cases leaves may fall off. By the end of the season infected areas form brown-black spores. For more information: https://youtu.be/P70patwnhCE</p>	

Rust Continued



Both images Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

Nutrition (sensitive to overuse of N) - Most beans can produce their own Nitrogen. Overuse of N can cause discoloration (yellowing, dark venation etc.). For more information: <https://youtu.be/Yr0jnPpyYOg>



Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

Fusarium – Also called Fusarium yellows or Fusarium wilt. Typically, damage occurs on medium or older plants, with yellowing or wilting on lower leaves. Eventually the entire plant will do the same. The vascular tissue often becomes red-brown. For more information: <https://youtu.be/1vaabBob39g>



Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University,
Bugwood.org

Botrytis – Symptoms begin with dark, water-soaked lesions, sometimes with a yellow margin. Brown streaks then form on stems and petioles. As tissue dries powdery spores form. For more information: <https://youtu.be/l-hWtlcXZBY>

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Freeze Damage - Frost hit dry beans will NOT store - Leaves and beans may appear water-soaked soon after frost, developing into necrotic/dead leaves.



Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University,
Bugwood.org

Fruit

Pollywogging - Bean has erratic shape. Typically due to irregular pollination. Weird fruit shape.

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Blossom drop – Can be an indication of irregular water, too much heat etc. For more information:
https://youtu.be/Py7G_N-Lxp8

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Bugwood.org

Halo Blight - Damage can occur on leaves or fruit, first shows up as small water-soaked spots (pin prick sized). A light green or yellow halo develops around the spots. Spots may become sunken or have white ooze on fruit pods. May also impact the seeds.



Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University,
Bugwood.org

Anthracnose - Infects leaves, stems, and pods of beans. Cankers begin with a black-red sunken area. Veins may eventually turn red to purple on the underside, eventually becoming black.

For more information:

<https://youtu.be/H242VdWLI MI>

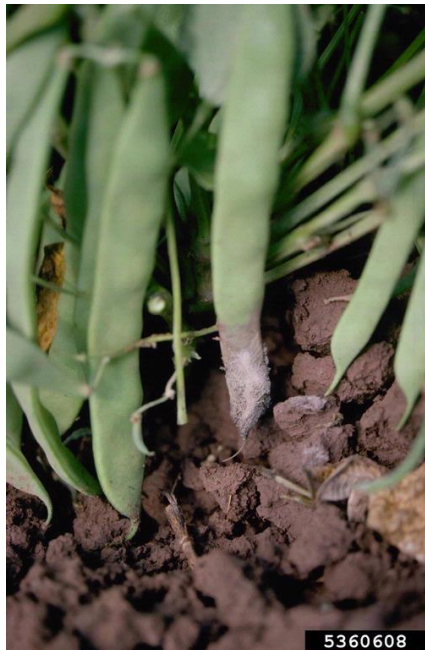


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Bugwood.org

Powdery mildew – First appears as white, powdery areas on leaves, shoots and sometimes fruit. Spots will spread over a large area. Affected leaves may yellow and die. If fruit is affected, it can be brownish spots. Yields may be reduced in affected plants.

For more information:

<https://youtu.be/o2H3vkoM6Zo>



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Howard F. Schwartz, Colorado State University,
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Leaf

Rust - May start with yellow or white raised spots on leaves or stem. Infected plants may look scorched from the sun. May have a yellow halo. In severe cases leaves may fall off. By the end of the season infected areas form brown-black spores.

For more information:

<https://youtu.be/P70patwnhCE>



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Common mosaic virus -

Symptoms typically visible on leaves. Visible patterns of light green-yellow leaf tissue, dark green tissue or both light and dark together. Leaf puckering is also common on affected leaves. Beans affected when young may be stunted or distorted.

For more information:

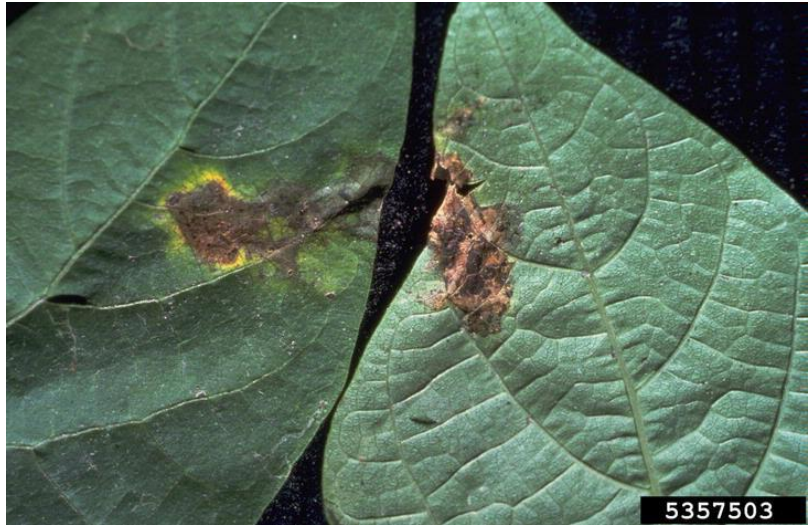
<https://youtu.be/AFZW6JBul2Y>

<https://youtu.be/FgtzRUjaml>



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Bugwood.org

Bacterial blight -Typically early season disease. Early symptoms are brown spots on leaf margins. Later symptoms include angular lesions, dark reddish-brown. A yellow-green halo develops around the edge of the lesions. Young leaves are most susceptible. Can also occur on pods, seeds rarely show symptoms.



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Root

N/A