

# CITRUS DISEASE SPOTLIGHT

## Citrus scab

By Megan Dewdney



Mature symptoms on mature Temple tangor leaves



Young scab lesions on Temple tangor fruitlets showing the raised nature of the lesions



Mature lesions on Temple tangor fruit showing the corky and wart-like nature of the lesions

Spring is on its way and it is time for fresh fruit producers to think about foliar fungal diseases. Citrus scab is a common problem on tangerines, tangerine hybrids and grapefruit in humid climates like Florida. Very rarely, the disease can be observed on sweet oranges. To successfully control the disease, timing of fungicide applications is the key.

**Scientific name:** *Elsinoë fawcettii*.

**Leaf and stem symptoms:**

Young tissues of leaves and twigs are susceptible. Tiny water-soaked lesions are first observed on the lower surfaces of young leaves five to seven days post-infection. These lesions become pale orange, circular, elevated lesions. When fully developed, the lesions are pale tan with corky,



Raised citrus scab lesions and wind-scar resembling lesions on Fir tangerine

scabbed tissue that is wart-like. Often, mature lesions are on conical protrusions that leave a corresponding hollow on the opposite side of the leaf. This is especially prominent on Temple. Badly affected leaves can become distorted, crinkled and stunted. On twigs, the lesions form small warty growths.

**Fruit symptoms:** Early scab symptoms on young fruit are raised with a cream to pinkish color with a small yellow halo. As the lesions age, they become olive to dark tan. If the fruit is young when infected, it can become deformed with prominent warty protrusions. On some cultivars, like Temple, conical protrusions form under the lesions. On grapefruit, the lesions usually flatten out to resemble wind-scar, but with a more scaly appearance. Lesions can coalesce to affect a large portion of the surface, rendering the fruit unacceptable for the fresh market.

**Management:** Fungicide applications should be planned for 1) one-quarter expansion of spring flush; 2) petal fall; and 3) approximately three weeks later. If little inoculum is present, the first spray can be omitted. More details can be found in the Florida Citrus Pest Management Guide (<http://www.crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/pest/>).

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