

# Fact sheet: Summer Canker



Officially known as *Pectobacterium carotovorum subsp. Actinidiae*, Summer Canker is a bacterial canker currently attacking gold kiwifruit in Korea. It has the potential to cause significant economic impact during the hot summer months.

## Signs and symptoms

Symptoms are similar to Psa but without the presence of leaf spotting and with a much higher optimal temperature.

Typical symptoms are characterised by red-rust exudation on canes (*image, right*) or trunks, sudden leaf blight and die back or blight on young canes from summer to autumn. Severely infected vines result in plant death even in midsummer.

No symptoms developed on the fruit of infected vines.



## Distribution and climate range

*Pectobacterium carotovorum* is a plant pathogen with a diverse host range including potato and other important agricultural crops.

Initially the causal bacterium of *Pectobacterium* canker was considered to be the same bacterium as *Pectobacterium carotovorum subsp. carotovorum* which is widely distributed, including a presence in New Zealand. However, subsequent studies have found the causal bacteria is a separate subspecies (*subsp. Actinidiae*) reported only in the Jeju province of Korea and parts of Eastern China.

The canker of this subspecies has only been found on kiwifruit and is particularly problematic on gold. *P. carotovorum* occurs after rain in hot summers, preferring temperatures 30–32°C, making rain-covered orchards the most likely habitats.



## Control

Good pruning practice is thought to be one of the most effective practices to prevent Summer Canker. Good hygiene practices and disinfection of tools will prevent spread and sealing pruning wounds with a sealing paint containing a bactericide will help prevent infection. Major pruning should not be done during optimum temperatures for the canker, which in New Zealand would be on hot summer days and likely only under rain-covered orchards.

**What should you do if you think you have seen vines displaying these symptoms?**

**Phone MPI on 0800 80 99 66 or KVH on 0800 665 825**