

## Avocado scab

### What is Avocado scab?

Avocado scab (*Sphaceloma perseae*) is a widespread fungal disease of avocado that causes severe losses from fruit drop and reduces fruit quality by marking fruit.

### What does it look like?

Leaf symptoms begin as small discrete lesions which are often concentrated along the midrib and main veins, but lesions may coalesce into star-like patterns. Shot-holes may also develop. As the disease progresses, leaves become distorted and stunted. Lesions may also occur on leaf petioles, twigs and fruit pedicels.

Symptoms on fruit initially appear as corky, raised, oval or irregular shaped brown to purplish-brown spots. As the disease progresses, spots enlarge and coalesce to form large rough areas over the fruit surface. Cracking of these rough areas may allow secondary organisms to penetrate and rot the fruit.

### What can it be confused with?

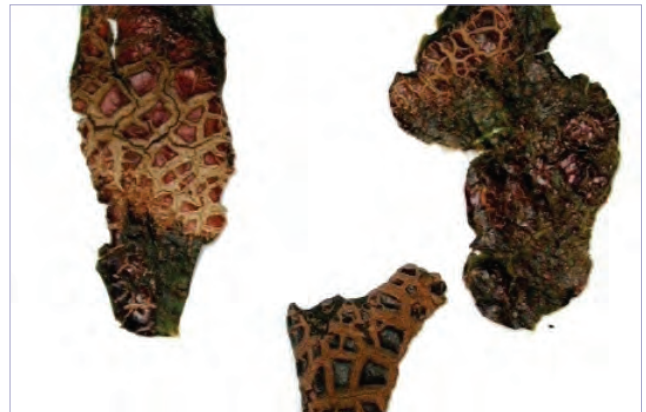
Avocado scab can be confused with physiological damage such as fruit rub.

### What should I look for?

Look for brown or purple-brown lesions or rough, cracked scabby areas on fruit and distortion of leaves.

### How does it spread?

*S. perseae* can be spread locally by wind, rain and insects. Insect wounds can increase entry of the pathogen and make scab development worse. Long distance transport is possible through fruit movement but most likely in infected propagation material.



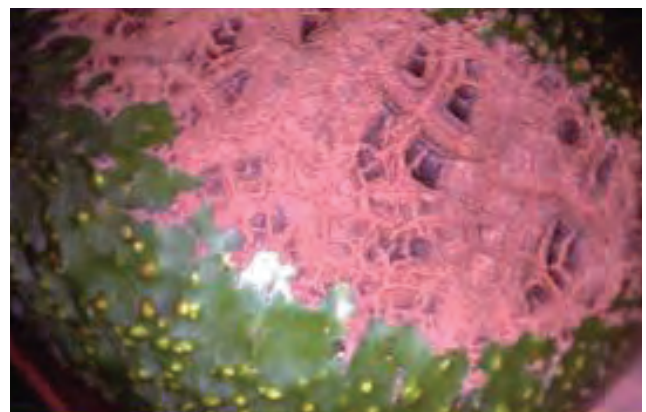
Cracked scabby areas develop on fruit

Cesar Calderon, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



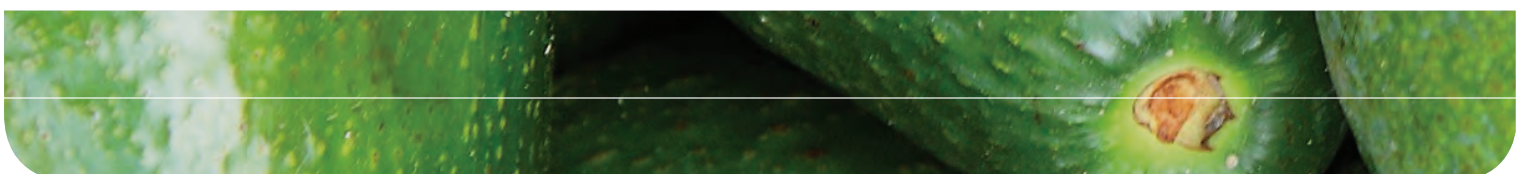
Corky, raised, spots appear on fruit

Randy Ploetz, University of Florida



Scabs may be brown, purplish or pink in appearance

Ken Pegg, DEEDI





### Where is it now?

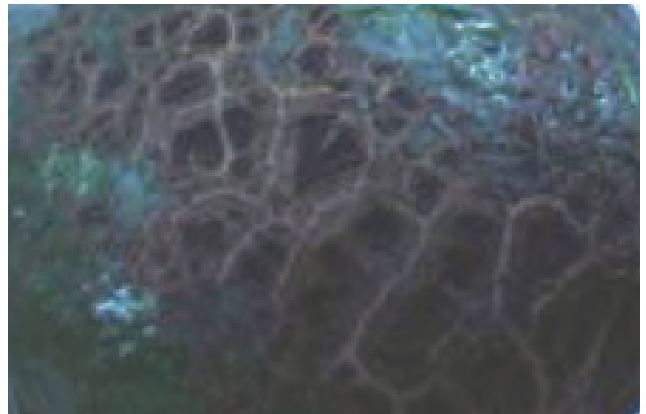
Avocado scab is present in South Africa, North America, Central America, West Indies, South America, Morocco and the Philippines.

### How can I protect my orchard from Avocado scab?

Source plant material only from clean, accredited suppliers, and preferably material that is certified. Check your orchard frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common avocado diseases so you can tell if you see something different.

**If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline**

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE  
1800 084 881**



Spots begin to coalesce

Ken Pegg, DEEDI



Leaves can become distorted and stunted

Ken Pegg, DEEDI



Spots enlarge and coalesce to form large rough areas

Randy Ploetz, University of Florida

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