



European Red Mite

Description Of The Pest

European Red Mites (Scientific name: *Panonychus ulmi*) overwinter as eggs located at the base of buds and spurs on small branches, in wounds, or bark cracks. Eggs are red with a slender stalk arising from the center. The tiny newly-hatched mites are green, but with feeding, turn red. They have white spots at the base of the large hairs on the back. These mites have 5 to 10 generations per year.

Damage

European red mites cause leaf discoloration. Prolonged feeding causes leaves to turn pale, appear bronzed and burned at the tips and margins. Almond trees that are not stressed for water or by any other factor can tolerate high infestation levels (in excess of 50 mites per leaf) for extended periods without experiencing leaf drop. However, such populations will slow or stop tree growth. If the trees are stressed, high levels can cause defoliation. At low levels, mites can be beneficial; as they serve as an alternative food for mite predators. Nurseries, however, should not allow mite populations to increase as the insects reduce tree growth.



Adult female European red mite (top) and stippling damage (lower photo)

Management

Cultural Control. Most mite problems are a result of prior pesticide use (both in the nursery and adjacent crop fields). Many pesticides used to control other pests disrupt natural insect predators and allow mites to increase. In particular, nurseries near cotton fields often have mite problems, as heavy pesticide use in cotton kills predators and allows mite numbers to build-up.

Agrochemicals*. If infestation is severe, then applications may be required.

NARROW RANGE OIL (Omni Supreme and others)	Amt / ha (153 L / h H2O)
Mode of action: Contact including smothering and barrier effects.	6–9 L
Precautions: Avoid phytotoxicity by ensuring trees are well-watered. Oil works by contact only, so good coverage is essential.	
ABAMECTIN* (Agri-Mek) 0.15 EC	0.12–0.24 L
Precautions: May be combined with oil. Do not make more than 2 applications/growing season and allow at least 21 days between treatments. Do not exceed 0.24 L/ha/application.	
PROPARGITE (Omite) 6EC	0.574–0.766 L
(Omite) 30WP	0.3671 – 1.4685 Kg
Precautions: Do not apply more than twice/season. Do not apply less than 40 days after or 30 days before an oil application.	

*Remember to always read and follow manufacturer's instructions.

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