



Grafting and fireblight

Posted by [Claude Jolicoeur](#)
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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)
[Grafting and fireblight](#)

Registered: 11 years ago
Posts: 226

April 05, 2020 06:06PM

I have a question...

Can fireblight propagate by grafting?

Assuming there is no fireblight in an orchard, and I topgraft a scion that is apparently healthy but may come from an orchard where fireblight is present, is there any risk to introduce the blight and infect the tree - and eventually the whole orchard?

Thanks,

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Grafting and fireblight](#)

Registered: 11 years ago
Posts: 226

April 07, 2020 06:26PM

Surprised no one chimed in on this.

I was asked the question but couldn't give a definitive answer.

My intuition is there is no problem. For a simple reason - I have grafted in my orchard some scion wood from a great number of sources and this practically every year for the least 30 years at least. Obviously some of it must have come from an orchard where there was some blight present.

And I have never had any fire blight in my orchard.

So one of the following... either:

- I have been hugely lucky to have escaped it.
- Fire blight cannot survive in my orchard for whatever reason.
- Fire blight doesn't transmit through grafting wood.

Please let's hear your opinion!

Claude

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)


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[Josh Klatt](#)

[Re: Grafting and fireblight](#)

Registered: 11 years ago
Posts: 34

April 14, 2020 03:33AM

Wow- no fireblight ever !?! Is it because the main language in your orchard is french ?  I was in Normandy a couple years ago and everyone there said fireblight doesn't affect them.

Josh Klatt

Ohio River Valley

Zone 6b

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[Claude Jolicoeur](#)

[Re: Grafting and fireblight](#)

Registered: 11 years ago
Posts: 226

April 14, 2020 06:15AM

Maybe there is simply no fireblight inoculum in the region where my orchard is - which is fairly remote.

Something similar (maybe?) happened with pear scab. Apple scab there has always been, but the orchard has been free of pear scab for over 20 years. But then, Flemish Beauty (which is known to be sensitive) started having some one year, not much but some nevertheless. It took 2 more years but after that all pears from Flemish Beauty and Southworth trees have been entirely black and worthless. I have topgrafted them. The other varieties are OK.

Could something similar happen with fireblight? I don't know...

[Jolicoeur Orchard](#)

Zone 4 in Quebec

Author, [The New Cider Maker's Handbook](#)

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[Nathaniel Bouman](#)

[Re: Grafting and fireblight](#)

April 27, 2023 12:15AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 81

My guess is the risk of passing fireblight by scion is fairly small as the person harvesting the scion is not going to choose wood that shows symptoms and the work of grafting is generally done when the weather is not conducive to rapid reproduction. Still, if I was lucky enough to have an orchard with no FB then I would put it under a gigantic glass dome surrounded by a moat filled with electric eels.

Nat Bouman

Growing cider varieties in Zone 5b

On B.118 at 18X24

Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania

[Reply](#) [Quote](#)

[Matthew Mullet](#)

[Re: Grafting and fireblight](#)

April 28, 2023 09:27PM

Registered: 2 years ago

Posts: 14

Claude,

I think Nat's right that a person harvesting scion wouldn't choose wood with symptoms of fireblight (and you would also notice and not graft it). I guess theoretically it would be possible—but in my experience, when my trees get fireblight, the active infection overwinters in sunken cankers on larger main branches and any graftable wood 1-2 years old that got fireblight that season is black and shriveled and generally died back to a larger branch.

Matt

Fredericksburg, OH

Zone 6a

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