Iron Chlorosis

FACT SHEET

GREEN DROP Tree Care







What It Is:

Iron deficiency chlorosis is a common problem in fruit trees and certain ornamental species in Winnipeg. Although Iron is an abundant trace element in soil, plants may have difficulty absorbing enough in high lime or heavy clay soils. Other conditions which can induce iron deficiency include high soil pH (alkalinity), excess moisture, along with low soil temperatures.

Symptoms:

The first symptom is a gradual yellowing of the tissue between the veins on leaves, while the veins themselves tend to stay green. If not discovered soon, this condition may advance throughout the plant causing the tips and margins of some leaves to turn brown and become dry and brittle. Leaves may drop off the tree.

In severe cases the leaves can become so chloriotic that they appear almost white. The leaf tissue is then is so delicate that it easily scorches in the wind or sun.

Often one branch of a single tree or perhaps a few trees in an area may be affected. It is also possible to have an affected tree and a healthy tree of the same species growing side by side.

In severe cases, entire trees can lose their leaves and die.

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Treatment:

Because of the complex nature of Iron availability treatments are not always successful. However there are several treatments to attempt:

- Foliar sprays – Younger and smaller plants are more receptive to spray treatments than older and larger ones . Leaves may be sprayed with an Iron Chelate mixture. If treatment is successful the plants should begin to green up about 10 days after the application. Foliar applications are a temporary measure and successive treatment may be necessary.

- Soil applications of Iron Chelates - Several treatments incorporating iron chelate in the soil are needed for large trees, often during a three year period, before the yellow leaf condition disappears. With the most severely affected Maple or Birch tree it may take five years or longer.

- Soil amendment – Some iron is less available in soil with a high pH The addition of peat moss or the presence of decomposing organic matter may also improve Iron uptake. These methods are considerably less consistent than the use of Iron chelates.

Contact:

Tree Care

Canada's Tree Expert
Green Drop Tree Care
Telephone: 1(833)-928-8733
Email: trees@greendrop.com
URL: https://www.greendroptrees.com/
Winnipeg - Calgary - Red Deer - Edmonton - Regina - Saskatoon



