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Etiology of Apricot-tree Decline in Shahrood

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ABSTRACT

In recent years the die-back of apricot trees *(Armeniaca vulgaris)* has caused serious damage in Shahrood region. The wilt symptom first appeares on a few branches which then extends over the whole plant. Meanwhile petioles show epinasty and leaves get rolled, dropped and vascular tissue becomes brownish. Upon growth of infected tissues on PDA, a fungus, *Verticillium dahliae,* was consistently isolated. Pathogenicity of the fungus was proved on two-year old apricot trees. Inoculated palnts showed symptoms of wilting and xylem discoloration within 3-4 months. The fungus was reisolated from infected plants. Based on morphological and pathological characters the fungus was identified as *Verticillium dahliae.*

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