

# Forest Disease Management Notes

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service  
Pacific Northwest  
Region



## Yellow Brown Top Rot

Yellow brown top rot is caused by *Fomitopsis cajanderi*, formerly called *Fomes subroseus*. This fungus causes decay in broken-top trees.

**Hosts:** Most damaging on Douglas-fir (especially on the West Side); occasionally affects other conifers.

**Recognition:** Infection causes a green stain that develops into a brown pocket rot of the heartwood below the break. Trees with broken tops, volunteer tops, crooks, or forked tops, especially if frequent in the stand, indicate a high probability of infection. Small, inconspicuous, perennial conks occur in crotches of malformed tops or in breaks; tops of conks are dark gray or black; undersurfaces pink or rose-colored.

**Disease Spread:** Windborne spores infect primarily broken tops; amount of decay increases with break diameter and time since break.

**Management:** Remove broken-top trees when thinning. Stand replacement should be considered if damage is sufficiently severe to leave few or no crop trees. Stands near commercial size may be carried through the rotation if sufficient crowns remain.

**May be Confused With:** Brown trunk rot (*F. laricis*); brown crumbly rot (*F. pinicola*).



*Fomitopsis cajanderi* conks

Decay caused by  
*Fomitopsis cajanderi*

