



Symptoms of potassium deficiency in plum trees

Potassium deficiency is commonly noted in most deciduous fruit trees, by curling up of the leaves' margins. Since the potassium cation (K^+) is rather mobile in both the xylem and the phloem transport systems of the plant, and since the plant is programmed to prefer the development of young tissues, the tendency in most plants is to extract the K from the old organs and tissues, and to pass it to the newer ones. This is the reason for the general phenomenon that K deficiency shows up firstly on the older and more mature foliage of the plant. However, in a potassium- deficient European plum tree, the shoot apex and young developing leaves become chlorotic and necrotic. New shoots may be underdeveloped in affected trees. Fruits may show reduced size and may not develop the full coloration typical to the species and the specific cultivar. Also, the shelf life may be shorter than well K- fed plums and prunes.