Recognize the problem
Anthracnose is a fungal disease of mango. It causes many small, round, black sunken spots on ripe fruits and leaves, which later get bigger. Spots on leaves may look similar to black sooty mould lesions but the latter are usually larger, and not sunken into the leaf. Fruit fly damage on fruits may look similar and should be ruled out by cutting fruits open to look for fruit fly maggots. Fruits infected with anthracnose develop linear grey/black stains on their skin. This can develop into wide, deep cracks which expose the fruit flesh beneath. Anthracnose causes most damage between flowering and harvesting stage. Affected flowers may wither and some die before fruit set. The disease also produces cankers (swellings) on stems.

Background
The fungus attacks mango, banana, avocado, papaya, coffee, passion fruit, and other fruits. The fungus hides in the bark, stems, leaves and flowers. It spreads through dead branches, infected fallen leaves, rain splash, and wind. The fungus stays alive from season to season on dead leaves and branches. Cultural controls on their own are not enough, hence, systemic chemical sprays are used, such as Propiconazole. It is a protective and curative systemic fungicide. It enters the plant to stop the development of the fungus and spore formation. Be careful, it is quite toxic to you (WHO toxicity class II).

Management
• Buy Propiconazole-based fungicides from a registered agro-input dealer
• Some trade names for Propiconazole are Tilt 250EC, Orbit, Bumper and Quilt, but there are many more.
• Use a 16 or 20L knapsack for small trimmed mango trees, or a mist blower / broom sprayer for larger trees.
• Mix 5ml (2 teaspoons) in 1 litre water, but read product label for dosage instructions, because products differ.
• Add 2 tablespoons liquid soap or teepol to the fungicides to help keep spread the fungicide over the leaves.
• Spray when the trees start to flower and continue every two to three weeks up to one week before harvesting
• Spray when first symptoms on leaves are observed because the fungus spreads fast.
• Consider pre-harvest interval of minimum 14 days
• Spray at mid-morning when there is no dew (mume-Tonga) or late afternoons when the day is calm.
• Make full cover sprays to prevent arriving fungi from germinating Do not enter a sprayed orchard for at least a day

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > Colletotrichum gloeosporioides

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Zambia