

Blueberry Leaf Rust

What is Blueberry Leaf Rust?

- Caused by the fungus (*Naohidemyces vaccinia*)
- Can infect blueberries, cranberries, huckleberries, and other *Vaccinium* species.⁴
- Can cause early defoliation, affecting vigour and yield the following year
- Develops in warm, moist growing conditions
- Symptoms most likely to appear after harvest
- In northern climates, blueberry leaf rust uses hemlock as its alternate host.¹ With the Fraser Valley's warm climate, the disease might not need hemlock to complete its life cycle



Figure 1. Brown leaf spots

Symptoms:

- Appear in late summer
- Brown spots on the upper surface of leaves (*Fig. 1 & 2*)
- Powdery orange-yellow pustules on the underside of leaves (*Fig. 1 & 2*)
- Early defoliation

Varieties affected:

- In other regions, leaf rust has been found on Liberty, Brigitta and Chandler
- Other varieties may be susceptible.¹
- Bluecrop is resistant to leaf rust.³



Figure 2. Leaf rust pustules

Management:

- Monitor for the disease in nurseries during the spring and summer to help to decrease infection
- Use disease free planting material
- Plant disease resistant varieties
- Reduce movement of tools and machinery from infected fields to clean fields
- If leaf rust is established in area, remove hemlocks adjacent to blueberry fields.^{2, 3, 4 & 5}

1. Caruso, F.L. and Ramsdell, D.C. 1995. Compendium of Blueberry and Cranberry Disease. American Phytopathological Society.
 2. Extension. 2011. Leaf rust of blueberry. <http://www.extension.org/pages/29295/leaf-rust-of-blueberry#.VjURH7erTDC>. Accessed on October 30, 2015.
 3. Heidenreich, C., D. Fiacchino, and W. Koeller. Blueberry disease fast facts; Leaf rust. <http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/berry/ipm/ipmpdfs/BB%20leaf%20rust%20fast%20fact.pdf>. (accessed on October 25, 2015)
 4. Nelson, Scott. 2008. Blueberry Rust. University of Hawaii at Manoa Cooperative Extension Service. <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/oc/freepubs/pdf/PD-51.pdf>. (accessed on October 25, 2015)
 5. Tasmanian Government. 2014. Blueberry Rust. Biosecurity Tasmania Fact Sheet. <http://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity/plant-biosecurity/pests-and-diseases/blueberry-rust> (accessed on October 30, 2015)