



# Blueberry Scorch Virus Update

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# Blueberry Scorch Virus

- The scorch virus situation is worsening
- Symptoms are visible on many farms



# Blueberry Scorch Virus

- Delay of 1-2 years between infection and the development of symptoms (latency period)
- Scorch causes eventual plant death in most cultivars
- All cultivars of northern highbush blueberry are susceptible



# Blueberry Scorch Virus

The scorch virus spreads through:

- aphids
- infected planting stock

It does NOT spread through:

- root contact
- leaves rubbing together
- pruning shears



# Classic Scorch Virus Symptoms





Duke



Duke



Duke

# Reka





Elliott



Elliott



# Draper



# Draper



# Bluecrop



# Bluecrop



# Scorch Virus Management

- Monitor for virus symptoms
- Test bushes with symptoms
- Remove infected bushes
- Control aphids

# Submit samples for testing

- ▶ Blueberry Council covers the cost of virus testing for up to 30 samples per grower
- ▶ Additional samples can be submitted, producer will be charged
- ▶ Virus testing is done by Phyto Diagnostics
- ▶ Blueberry Council can provide courier to Phyto Diagnostics
  - ▶ Drop off samples at Blueberry Council on Mondays or Tuesdays



# Remove scorch-infected bushes

- ▶ Remove the entire bush, including rootball
- ▶ If it is not possible to remove the rootball during the growing season:
  - stump the bush
  - spray a herbicide on the stump
  - do not allow the plant to regrow
  - remove the rootball in the fall or winter
- ▶ Infected plants can be chipped or composted









# Talk to your neighbours

Industry needs to work together to slow the spread of the scorch virus



# Resources

BC Blueberry Production Guide

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriservice-bc/production-guides/berries/blueberries>

Blueberry Field Guide

<https://fieldguide.bcblueberry.com/>

Scorch Virus Factsheet - BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/animal-and-crops/plant-health/phu-blueberryscorchvirusss.pdf>

Scorch Virus Factsheet - Climate Action Initiative (E.S. Cropconsult)

<https://www.climateagriculturebc.ca/library/blueberry-scorch-virus-ipm-guide/>



Thank-you

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