



Valdensinia leaf spot on wild blueberry

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with information from Paul Hildebrand
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Leaf spots are round and brown in the center with a dark margin. Often there is a dark or light spot (the spore) in the center of the lesion (usually on the underside of the leaf).

There does not appear to be any difference between clones in their susceptibility to this fungus. This disease occurs in both prune and crop fields.



Brown area in center is an area of severe leaf drop in a prune field. Leaf spots were found on green plants approximately 10 ft around central area of leaf drop.

Young leaves infected with one leaf spot will fall off. Leaves drop off while still green. Most leaf drop will occur early in the season (before the end of July). Prune stems with early leaf drop will not produce flower buds for next year.





Leaf spots on older leaves of plants around an area of severe leaf drop in a crop field. Crop fields infected with disease will have lower yields.

Older leaves will stay on plants until the fall.

The fungus can also attack other nearby plants, but typically with smaller spots.





Dead infected leaves are the source of new spores and how the fungus overwinters.

If dead infected leaves are wet for 48 hours, they will produce new spores that are shot off up to 8 inches high.

These spores are very large and cannot travel by wind or water movement.

Once the spore lands on a leaf they will stick and if there is approximately 6 to 8 hours of leaf wetness, they will penetrate into the leaf.



Moving dead infected leaves by humans, and maybe animals, rapidly spreads the disease.

Photos shows areas where leaves have been spread by walking (left) or driving (right) through an infected area on a wet day producing new areas of leaf drop.

Moving ONE dead leaf can spread disease

- Spreads by moving dead, infected leaves on footwear, vehicles, equipment
- Fungus survives on dead leaves over winter (dark areas circled on leaves below)





Valdensinia leaf spot:

Look for:

- Large round spots $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch with brown centers and darker margins
- defoliation of stems (loss of lower leaves early in the season (before the end of July))

As a PRECAUTION:

CLEAN all the leaves off of footwear and equipment (blueberry boxes, ATVs, Harvesters, etc.) BEFORE you let them in your field or move equipment between fields.

If you find *Valdensinia* leaf spot disease in your field:

- Do not enter the field when it is wet
- Remove dead leaves from footwear, vehicles, equipment before stepping into healthy areas or leaving the field.
- Collect a fresh sample of the diseased stems, place in a sealed plastic bag and mail (ASAP) to Dr. Seanna Annis to confirm disease (5735 Hitchner Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5735)
- More info at the Blueberry Extension website <http://wildblueberries.maine.edu>



Septoria leaf spot

- Very common in most fields in Maine
- many smaller spots, not circular
- dark red/brown center, lighter margins
- can cause leaf drop mid July and later

Valdensinia leaf spot

- Newer disease in Maine
- few large spots
- light brown center, darker margins, often small spot in center
- causes leaf drop in May to about mid July