



Blueberry Scorch Virus Quarantine

The blueberry scorch virus quarantine (WAC 16-489) helps protect our thriving blueberry industry. Blueberry scorch virus (BISV) is a serious disease of blueberries. Under the quarantine, all regulated plants planted, sold, offered for sale or transported within Washington State must be free of blueberry scorch virus.

What is blueberry scorch virus and what does it do?

Blueberry scorch virus (BISV) is a serious disease of blueberries. Symptoms look the same as those observed in blueberry shock infected plants. In some cultivars, sudden and complete death of leaves and flowers can occur. Twigs can die back 2-4 inches (5-10 centimeters), and severe infections can kill the bush. The plant usually retains the scorched blossoms into the fall. Once bushes are infected, the plant health will continue to decline leading to significant yield loss and eventual mortality. The blueberry scorch virus can kill plants in three to six years. BISV puts growers' ability to produce blueberries at high risk. Symptoms may be confused with abiotic problems such as frost damage or other blossom blights.

Plants infected by blueberry scorch virus can remain asymptomatic for one to two years. Because of this long latency period, growers who are not continually monitoring may not notice BISV in fields until it is established. Although the plant is asymptomatic, it can serve as a source for transmission to other plants. Symptoms appear during early bloom. Blossoms blight and turn brown, then gray. New growth can blacken and die back. Leaves can develop oak leaf patterns of red and yellowing margins. Symptoms can appear on a few stems at first, but will spread in the following years. Yields can drop rapidly as plant health declines.



What does the quarantine protect us from?

Any and all strains of blueberry scorch carlavirus.

What areas are affected?

All states, territories, and districts of the United States, including the entire state of Washington.

What is regulated?

Vaccinium corymbosum (blueberry) plants and *Vaccinium macrocarpon* (cranberry) plants, as well as other *Vaccinium* sp. shown to be hosts of blueberry scorch virus.

What's NOT regulated?

Blueberry fruit that is free of leaf tissue.

How does the quarantine work?

All regulated plants that are planted, sold, offered for sale or transported within the state must be shown to be free of blueberry scorch virus by meeting at least one of the following conditions.

- Originate from a pest-free area.
- Certified under an official certification program in the state of origin that includes testing and inspection for blueberry viruses.
- Shown to be free of blueberry scorch virus, based on an official laboratory test.
- Micro-propagated and/or grown in an insect-proof greenhouse or screenhouse and originate from mother plants that have been tested and found free of blueberry scorch virus.

Anyone who imports regulated plant material into Washington must obtain a phytosanitary certificate from the plant protection organization where it originated that verifies one of the conditions listed above are being met. A copy of the phytosanitary certificate must accompany the shipment.

The receiver of the imported plants must notify WSDA within 48 hours of arrival, at Nursery@agr.wa.gov. Receivers must keep the phyto and source records for at least one year from date of arrival and show them to WSDA when requested.

Receivers may be able to obtain a special permit in advance, allowing otherwise prohibited plants to enter Washington.



For a list of certified source nurseries, email: Nursery@agr.wa.gov

For more information on plant quarantines: agr.wa.gov/departments/plant-health

If you are interested in establishing a blueberry plant certification program in Washington, contact Cindy Cooper, Plant Services program manager, at 360-870-5069.

Do you need this publication in an alternate format? Contact WSDA at (360) 902-1976 or TTY Relay (800) 833-6388.