

Bacterial Leaf Scorch

A vascular disease of shade trees



What is it?

Bacterial leaf scorch (BLS) is caused by *Xylella fastidiosa*, a xylem-inhabiting bacterium thought to have originated in North America.



Which trees are at risk?

A wide range of host trees are susceptible to BLS including oak, maple, elm, sycamore, horse chestnut, sweetgum, and mulberry. Within oaks, the disease appears to be more severe in the red oak group than in the white oak group.

Where is it?

BLS has been reported throughout the eastern United States and into Texas. It has been detected on trees in both urban and forest settings.

Symptoms

- Symptoms appear similar to those of drought stress: leaf scorch, branch dieback and eventually tree death. A laboratory test is required for accurate diagnosis.
- Necrotic tissue first appears around leaf margins and progresses toward the midrib and leaf base. There may be a distinct band between healthy and necrotic leaf tissue which appears “water soaked”.
- Symptoms first appear isolated on one or more branches, and progress throughout the canopy over subsequent seasons.

Scan the QR code for a [Sample Submission Form](#):

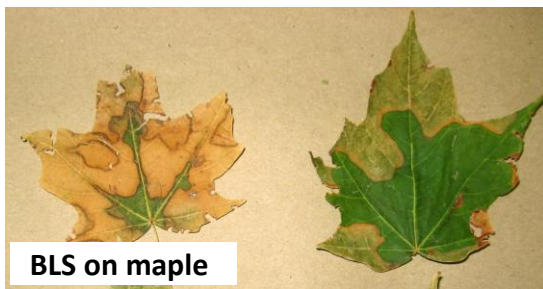
The Plant Disease Information Office is accepting samples with the following:

- Leaf scorch symptoms along the leaf margin.
- Symptoms which appeared mid summer through fall.
- Samples must consist of **twigs with 20-30 leaves attached**, petioles intact.
- Samples from the following hosts will be accepted:
 - oak, maple, elm, sycamore, horse chestnut, sweetgum, and mulberry



Send fresh samples between **September 16** through **October 31** for lab analysis.

Include photos of the entire tree. Fallen leaves from the ground will NOT be accepted.



BLS on maple



BLS on elm

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How is Bacterial Leaf Scorch spread?

Several xylem feeding insects, including sharpshooters, leafhoppers and spittlebugs, are known to vector BLS.

Disease Management

There are no treatments for BLS. Management efforts should focus on maintaining tree vigor especially during times of drought, monitoring tree health, proper disease diagnosis and pruning and removal of symptomatic material.

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For more information on Bacterial Leaf Scorch, visit:

<https://usfs-public.app.box.com/v/CurrentPestAlerts/file/1272386317338>