

Questions to ask the propagator before you buy plants...

◆ **What is the source of your material?**

Propagators should have special plants set aside (mother plants) that are for propagation only. These need to be kept free of aphids. Detailed records need to be kept to identify where plants originated

◆ **Have your plants been tested for blueberry scorch virus?**

Large numbers of samples can be tested in Phyto Diagnostics, at Saanich, on Vancouver Island. Their phone number is (250) 655-1444.

◆ **Have your plants been tested for other viruses?**

This is another virus disease. It is present just across the border in Washington State but has not yet been detected in Canada. Testing is recommended for the shock virus because of its close proximity to BC, and because of the recent movement of plant material.

Shoestring virus is another disease of concern that is not yet present in BC. Routine testing of propagation material for shoe-string would be a valuable objective to strive for.

◆ **What plants were tested?**

We are recommending that all mother plants (plants from where the cuttings are taken) be tested each year. It is more economical to test mother plants than every cutting taken from them.

◆ **How and When was the testing done?**

The virus is well distributed within an infected plant so a sample should consist of 2-3 leaves per bush. Mother plants should be tested after bud break and before the end of August each year.

◆ **Who did the sampling?**

We recommend that an experienced person who is independent of the propagator's farm take the samples to ensure they are taken properly, and handled appropriately before submitting to the testing lab.

Blueberry Scorch Virus **FACTSHEET**



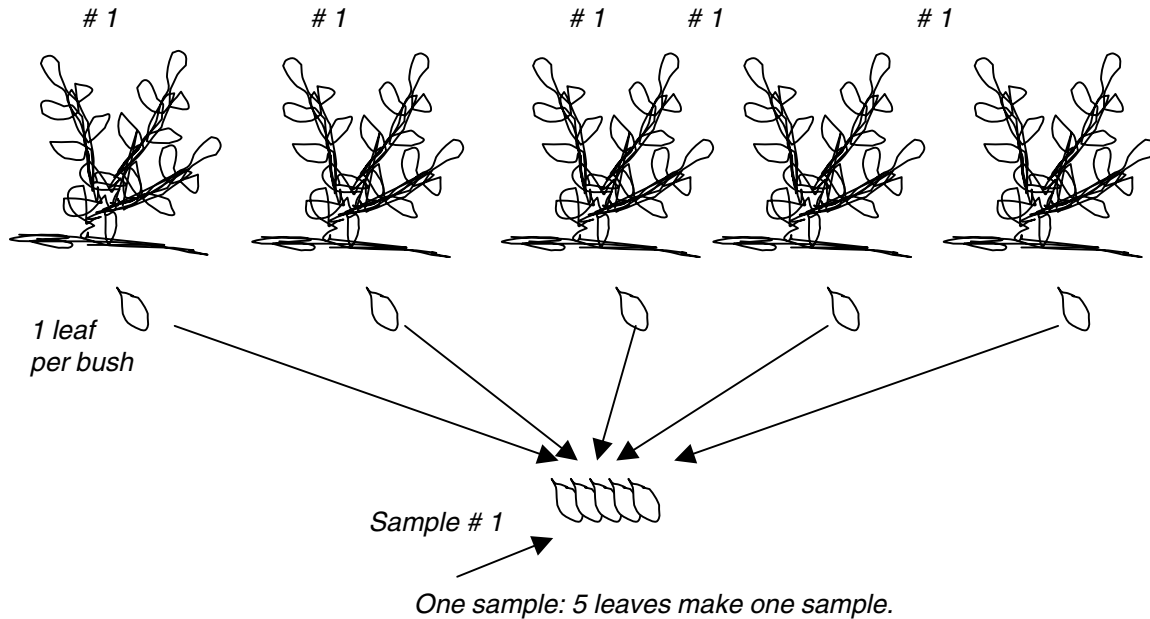
**BRITISH
COLUMBIA**

**Ministry of Agriculture, Food
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April 2001

◆ **What if I have already bought plants, and they were not tested?**

Plants can still be sampled but it is not feasible to test each one. A random analysis of 50 group samples per 10,000 plants should give a good indication if virus is present. Collect 1 young fully expanded leaf per bush. You will need to collect 250 leaves in total. Combine single leaves into group samples of 5 leaves each. Ensure that each bush is labeled with the number of the group sample so that they can be retested if the result for the group is positive. With a positive result, each bush within the group of 5 would need to be retested individually to determine how many were infected. Samples can be tested at Phyto Diagnostics, at Saanich, on Vancouver Island. Their phone number is (250) 655-1444.



Blueberry scorch poses a serious threat to the BC blueberry industry, especially because our blueberry fields are concentrated in a small area.

Cooperation on everyone's part will help to minimize the spread of blueberry scorch and maintain the health of our industry.

For further information

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