

Stunt

Stunt phytoplasma

Blueberry stunt is a virus-like disease mainly present in eastern North America.

Symptoms. Infected bushes are severely stunted and branches appear bushy because of shortened internodes.

Leaves are cupped slightly downward and may also have chlorotic areas that turn red in fall.



Short bushy growth at base of infected bush.

Disease cycle. The stunt phytoplasma is a microorganism that inhabits the sapwood and is vectored by sharp-nosed leafhoppers (*Scaphytopius* spp.). Infections coincide with peaks in leafhopper activity and become systemic. Plants are infected for life.

Leaves showing downward cupping and chlorotic edges are typical of blueberry stunt.

Management. Plant virus-tested, clean planting stock; remove and destroy infected plants; monitor leafhoppers and apply well-timed insecticides.



A stunted bush (left) next to a healthy bush.