



What to do.

If you suspect you have an exotic invasive pest or think you have an infestation, please contact the Clemson University Department of Plant Industry or your local Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service office.

For more information on invasive species, visit our website or find us on social media.



A partnership to protect your agricultural & natural resources.

Who we are. What we do.

The Department of Plant Industry, a part of Regulatory Services in Clemson University's Public Service and Agriculture, helps prevent the introduction of new plant pests into South Carolina as well as the spread of existing plant pests to non-infested areas.

Plant pest surveys, inspections, quarantines, control and eradication programs are among the tools used to safeguard the state's agricultural and natural resources.

We help horticultural businesses - such as nurseries, greenhouse growers, transplant growers and turf grass producers - as well as farmers, agricultural industries and South Carolina consumers in shipping plant material intrastate, interstate and internationally.

Inspections and certification services help ensure that plants are pest-free, which is essential for movement of plant material to other states and foreign countries.

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Boxwood Blight



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A deadly disease.

Boxwood blight is a fungal disease caused by the pathogen *Calonectria pseudonaviculatum* on *Buxus*, *Pachysandra*, and *Sarcococca* genera. Although the symptoms can be confused with several common diseases, boxwood blight is significant because it can infect healthy plant tissue and does not require stress or damage for the disease to take hold.



What it looks like.

In the early stages of infection, boxwood blight presents as **leaf spots** that typically have dark margins. The leaf spots grow and coalesce until the entire leaf turns brown or straw colored. **Defoliation** often occurs quickly after foliar symptoms first develop.



Dark brown to black lesions often develop on infected stems. Black streaking may appear in a diamond pattern.



The pathogen can spread in infected stock or leaf litter, and on contaminated equipment and shoes. If you suspect your plants have boxwood blight, alert your extension office as soon as possible, do not move any articles from the infected area, and use sanitation measures until you receive further instruction.

High-risk conditions.

Boxwood blight thrives and spreads rapidly under warm, humid conditions. Commercial settings are particularly susceptible because of the close proximity of plants, overhead irrigation and an abundance of leaf debris.



Under high humidity, white, fuzzy spore clusters can be visible to the naked eye on infected stem and leaf tissue. Orange spore clusters are characteristic of the more common *volutella* fungal pathogen.

Sanitation is key.

Good sanitation practices help prevent the introduction and spread of boxwood blight. These practices are critical for people and plants that may have come into contact with the pathogen.

Boxwood blight causes rapid defoliation and the resulting leaf litter can infect neighboring plants. Be sure to keep the area under your boxwoods clear of any **debris and leaf litter**, and monitor water run-off for any plant material that may be washing down stream.



Use a sanitizer (10% bleach solution or hydrogen peroxide) to clean **equipment and surfaces** that may have come into contact with infected material. Be sure to wash your **hands and clothing** when dealing with host material. **Shoes** can be easily disinfected with common aerosol sprays.

There is currently no effective treatment for boxwood blight. All **positive host material** and surrounding leaf litter and soil should be double-bagged and buried or burned. Do not re-plant the affected area with any of the host genera as the pathogen can remain in the soil for years to come.

