



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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*Putting Science to Work for Society
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – December 12, 2011

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New Fungal Blight Infecting Boxwood Plants

New Haven, CT – Scientists at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station have discovered that a fungus (*Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculatum*) new to the United States is killing some boxwood plants in Connecticut. These popular, attractive plants are common landscape ornamentals often used for hedges.

Infected plants were first detected in Middlesex County during October of this year and were subsequently found in Fairfield, Hartford, and New London Counties. Although the fungus causes noticeable foliar lesions and stem cankers, early infections can be difficult to detect. Once infected, plants decline rapidly. The unusually high amounts of precipitation received this year and relatively warm temperatures this fall have favored fungal growth. Fungicides currently registered for use are not curative for Boxwood blight.

The virulent fungus mainly attacks *Buxus* species and is a widespread problem in the United Kingdom, other areas of Western Europe, Russia (Georgia), and in New Zealand. It is unknown when or how the pathogen entered the United States or how well the fungus will survive the Connecticut winters. Fungal infections have been confirmed in Virginia and North Carolina.

Regulatory investigations are ongoing in Connecticut and several other states to identify the sources and geographic distributions of the infection. Current research in Connecticut focuses on molecular identification (DNA fingerprinting) of the fungus to hopefully aid in determining the source of infection and identifying a new fungicide that will control the pathogen.

“It is important to know that there are other types of boxwood fungal infections that can be controlled. Proper diagnosis and disposal of infected plants are critical in preventing the further spread of *C. pseudonaviculatum*” said Louis A. Magnarelli, Director of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

For assistance on Boxwood blight, call (203) 974-8496 or visit www.ct.gov/caes.

Fact Sheet:

[http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/fact_sheets/plant_pathology_and_ecology/boxwo od_blight- a_new_disease_for_connecticut_and_the_u.s._12-08-11.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/fact_sheets/plant_pathology_and_ecology/boxwo_od_blight- a_new_disease_for_connecticut_and_the_u.s._12-08-11.pdf)

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