Godronia canker of highbush blueberry restricted by suspected winter sun scald injury'

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In 1-year-old shoots of the highbush blueberry ***(Vaccinium corymbosum)*** cultivar Jersey, which is highly susceptible to godronia canker ***[Godronia cassandrae*** f. sp. ***vaccinii]***, cankers and pycnidia of the pathogen developed only on areas of the stem that did not show injury from winter sun scald.

Can. Plant Dis. Surv. 56:35. 1976

Sur les pousses d'un an du cultivar Jersey du bleuet en corymbe ***(Vaccinium corymbosum),*** tres sensible au chancre cause par ***Godronia cassandrae*** f. sp. ***vaccinii,*** le chancre et les pycnides de l'agent pathogene ne se sont developpes que dans les zones de la tige non endommagees par l'insolation en hiver.

The highbush blueberry ***Vaccinium corymbosum L.,*** cv. Jersey has been reported to be' the cultivar most susceptible to stem canker caused by ***Fusicoccum putrefaciens*** Shear ***(Topospora myrtilli*** (Feltg.) Boerema), stat. perf. ***Godronia cassandrae*** Peck f. sp. ***vaccinii*** [(Groves) Boerema & Verhoeven] (2). In mid June, 1975, it was observed that canker development on this cultivar was restricted by areas of suspected winter sun scald injury and this observation is reported here.

In July suspected winter sun scald injury (1), consisting of tan to brown longitudinal areas running almost the full length of the south side of 1-year old blueberry shoots, was frequently observed on several plants of the cultivar Jersey. The planting also contained the cultivars Blueray, Bluecrop, Coville, Berkeley, and Burlington, but none of these showed winter injury.

Many of the winter sun scald injured shoots were also infected with godronia cankers. Where the cankers were adjacent to areas injured by winter sun scald, the pattern of canker development was invariably that shown in Figure 1. Cankers developed normally on healthy tissue and were restricted to these areas by the winter sun scald injured areas. In the field, no canker or ***Fusicoccum*** pycnidia were found on the injured areas. However, when infected stems were held in moist chambers in the laboratory, a few scattered pycnidia of ***F. putrefaciens*** developed on the injured areas adjacent to cankered tissues.

This interesting observation and the fact that godronia cankers did not develop in winter sun scald injured tissue may be important in studying the development of this disease.

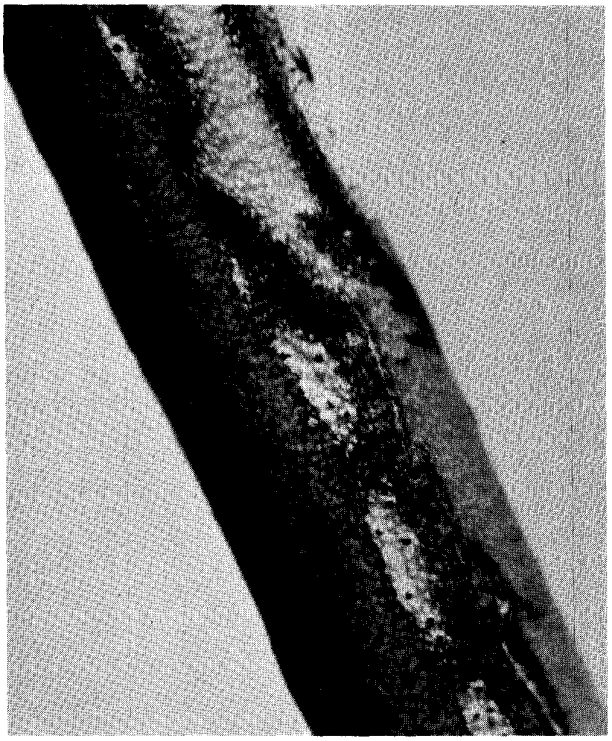

Figure 1. Godronia cankers restricted by suspected winter-injured area. The dark area on the left is the winter injury and the oblong light areas with dark curved borders on one side are cankers incited by ***Godronia cassandrae.***

Literature cited

1. Heald, F. D. 1926. Manual of plant diseases. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. New York. p. 158.
2. Lockhart, C. L., and D. L. Craig. 1967. Fusicoccum canker of highbush blueberry in Nova Scotia. Can. Plant Dis. Surv. 47:17-20.

[1] ***Contribution No. 1571, Research Station, Agriculture Canada, Kentviiie, Nova Scotia***