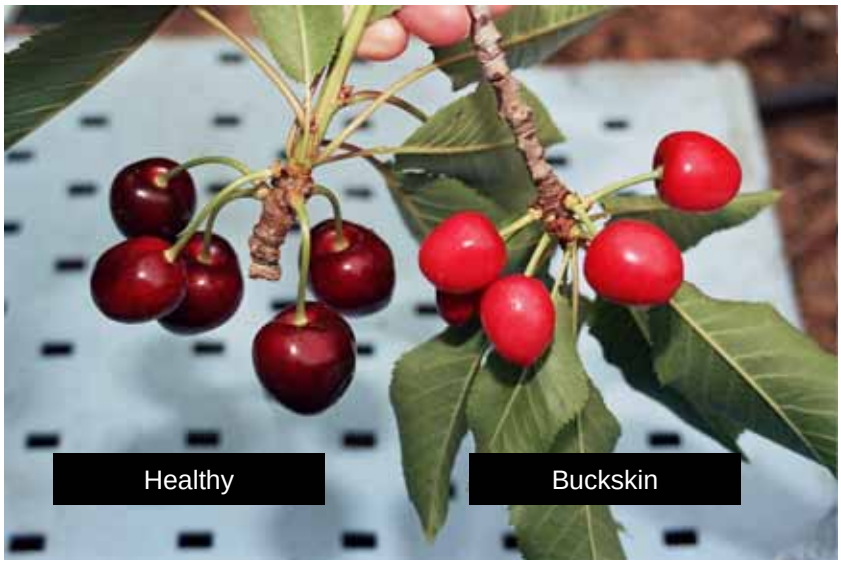
Cherry Buckskin Symptoms & Vectors

On Colt, Mazzard, Stockton Morello Rootstocks:

Look for fruit at harvest time that is that is not fully colored and is smaller and more pointed with shorter stems. Only a single branch may show symptoms the first year after infection with more branches exhibiting symptoms in subsequent years. Foliage symptoms are not obvious in the early infection years. Eventually leaves become smaller, foliage appears sparse, shoot tips die back and after several years the tree will finally die.

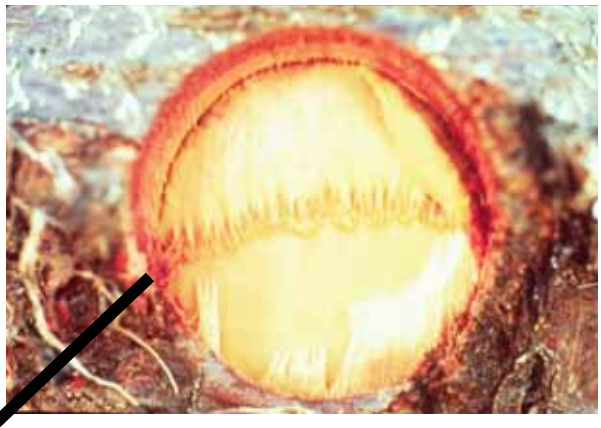


Cherry leaf hopper is the main vector. It lives in cherries (and some other woody plants) and is responsible for spread within the orchard.

Mountain leafhopper is a secondary vector. It lives on herbaceous plants & weeds and occasionally feeds on cherries. It flies long distances and may introduce the disease to new areas.

On Mahaleb Rootstock:

Trees show a rapid decline that may look similar to root rot or gopher damage. Leaves of normal size turn yellow with a reddish tint and an upward curl. These symptoms appear within a few months of infection and the trees die shortly thereafter – usually in late summer or early the following year. Fruit does not show symptoms.



On Mahaleb rooted trees, look for zippering or pitting under the bark at the graft union to distinguish Buckskin disease from other causes of rapid decline.

Cherry Buckskin Hosts

Fruit Trees

Sweet cherries are the primary fruit tree hosts for Buckskin Disease. **Japanese plum** and **almond** may also become infected and serve as a source to infect cherries. When infected they have fruit and foliar symptoms similar to cherry on a permissive rootstock – small fruit that doesn't ripen fully and sparse foliage. Peach and nectarine may occasionally become infected but are a "dead end host" and will not re-infect any other plants. Apricot and prune are NOT hosts.

Buckskin disease symptoms on peach leaves

Weeds and Cover Crops

Clovers (especially bur clover) and dandelion can serve as host plants for the disease and should be removed from the orchard floor. Clovers should NOT be used in any cover crop mix planted in cherry orchards. Curly dock does not host the disease but attracts Mountain Leafhopper so efforts should also be made to remove this weed from the orchard floor.

Cherry Leafhopper Hosts

Remove or treat **ornamental cherries and plums** as well as these other ornamentals in or near cherry orchards if they harbor leafhoppers. Make the first treatment in **late March** to control overwintering nymphs before they mature and migrate into cherry orchards. Make a second treatment in **late June** to control nymphs that have hatched from overwintering eggs. This leafhopper may also occasionally breed on apple, pear, apricot, plum, peach and other trees in the rose family.

Boxwood *(Buxus spp.)*


Privet *(Ligustrum spp)*


Pyracantha *(Pyracantha spp.)*


Hawthorn (*Craetagus* spp)



Viburnum *(Viburnum tinus)*


Crabapple *(Malus spp.)*

Myrtle

Ceanothus *(Ceanothus spp.)*


Lilac *(Syringa spp.)*