

Part 2. Oilseeds and Other Alternative Crops

Blackleg in Canola – Reason for Alarm in Washington State?

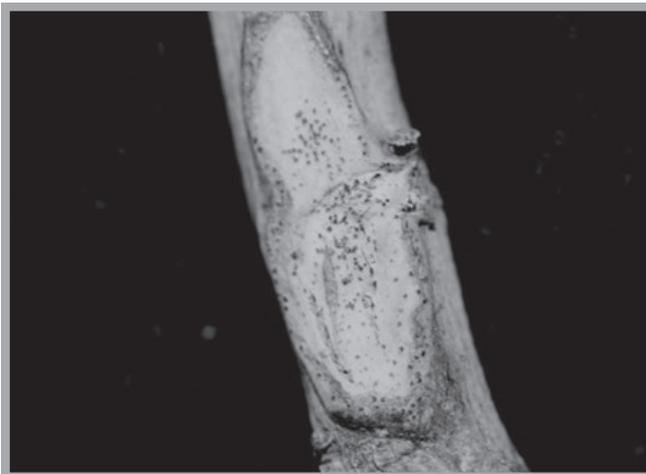
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In late March 2015, a crop consultant discovered blackleg (*Leptosphaeria maculans*, also commonly called *Phoma lingam*) in a winter canola field on the Camas Prairie in Idaho. Subsequent scouting by University of Idaho (UI) staff revealed blackleg in all but one of a dozen winter canola fields inspected from Moscow to Grangeville. An alert was immediately sent out to WSU and OSU members of a blackleg interest group that was formed after a blackleg outbreak in the Willamette Valley in 2014. Blackleg has been found in a few fields in northeast Oregon in both growing winter canola and 2014 winter canola residue. As of mid-April, more than 30 winter canola fields scouted in eight eastern Washington counties had no indication of blackleg infection. Washington state has always been blackleg-free, and the WSDA is in the process of a Rule Change that will take effect by July 2015 requiring ALL Brassica crops or cover crops containing Brassicas to go through testing, seed treatment and certification. The 'blackleg-free' certification must be clearly marked on any Brassica seed sold for any purpose. So, is there reason for alarm about blackleg, and growing canola and other brassicas in Washington state? Not alarm, but *awareness* of blackleg. In addition to regular scouting, the top three lines of defense are:

1. Crop rotation – be sure that canola, other Brassica crops, mustard family crops, weeds, and cover crops containing Brassica or mustard family species are only grown in the same field every 4 years, and control volunteers.
2. Buy blackleg resistant varieties that have been tested and certified blackleg-free and have a seed treatment (e.g. Helix Xtra, Helix Vibrance, Prosper 400 and Prosper Evergol).
3. If blackleg is discovered, consider applying fungicide (read and follow label instructions).

The Washington Oilseed Cropping Systems website (www.css.wsu.edu/biofuels) has blackleg resources including sampling protocol, fact sheets, presentations about blackleg, and PNW university contacts.



From Tim Paulitz, USDA-ARS plant pathologist in Pullman, ***“The more eyes we have out there, the better. I think the reason it went undetected in the Camas Prairie is that no one was looking for it. Let’s not let it get away in Washington!”***