

## Biosecurity Advice

### Blueberry Rust, Western Australia

#### Pest

*Thekopsora minima* (Blueberry rust)

#### Date

27 June 2022

#### Location

Western Australia (WA)

#### Situation

In April 2022, the fungus *Thekopsora minima*, causal agent of Blueberry rust, was detected in WA. Tracing, surveillance and stakeholder engagement activities in WA led to detections in multiple locations, including the Perth metropolitan area, Manjimup and Swan View. Plants with symptoms have been reported by industry in Bunbury, Busselton, and Kalgoorlie.

In consultation with stakeholders, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development concluded that blueberry rust is not technically feasible to eradicate because of its:

- (1) high dispersal potential with spores carried long distances on the wind,
- (2) persistence in the environment,
- (3) difficulty to detect or eradicate in the urban area, and
- (4) climate suitability for spread in WA.

WA's area freedom certificate (AFC) for blueberry rust was revoked on 9 May 2022.

On 3 May 2022, the Chief Plant Biosecurity Officer notified industry of a review of the pest status of Blueberry rust and the intention to declare the pest as a permitted species and to remove import restrictions specific to Blueberry rust, in accordance with national biosecurity agreements.

The WA Department can now advise that:

Blueberry rust has been declared as a permitted species for WA and its status as a declared pest has been revoked. The updated status will be published next week on the Western Australian Organism List (<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/bam/western-australian-organism-list-waol>)

Import requirements specific to Blueberry rust (WA Import Requirement 057) will be removed from Thursday 30 June 2022. Imported plants and parts of plants (nursery stock, cuttings and budwood, tissue culture and fruit) of *Vaccinium* spp. are still required to meet WA import requirements for other biosecurity pests and diseases as published in the Quarantine WA Import Requirements Search here: <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/biosecurity-quarantine/quarantine/importing-western-australia>

For useful identification information and images, please use the on-line pest identification platform [www.pestid.com.au](http://www.pestid.com.au)

For further information, please email: [john.mcdonald@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:john.mcdonald@greenlifeindustry.com.au)

