Bacterial blight is caused by a bacterial pathogen that is present in most soybean fields.Young leaves are most susceptible to infection. Photo: *Dean Malvick, University of Minnesota*

BACTERIAL BLIGHT

Leaf spots caused by the bacterial blight pathogen can be found in most soybean fields every year in the Midwest. They are most common during rainy, humid periods in July and August. The bacteria can also infect snap bean and lima bean.

Bacterial blight is caused by the bacterium *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *glycinea*. The disease can be confused with **brown spot** (Septoria leaf spot) and with **bacterial pustule**. Bacterial blight and brown spot are especially common. Both diseases often occur in the same fields and even the same plant, and symptoms can be difflcult to separate.

Bacterial blight generally occurs at low levels that do not limit yield.

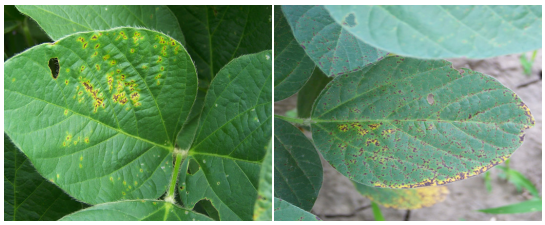
Disease cycle

The bacteria that cause bacterial blight overwinter in crop residue and on seed. Initial infections can occur during seedling emergence, especially if infected seed is planted. The bacteria are spread by wind and rain, and outbreaks that occur later in the season often follow wiindy rainstorms.

Bacterial blight is favored in continuous soybean fields, no-till soybean fields, or fields planted with seeds from infected soybeans.

Look-alikes

Bacterial blight is often confused with **brown spot**, a leaf spot disease caused by the fungus *Septoria glycines*. Bacterial blight occurs on upper new leaves and brown spot infection begins on older leaves, or leaves on the lower part of the plant.



A characteristic yellow halo forms around lesions caused by bacterial blight (left). Symptoms of Brown spot (right) show up as more generalized leaf yellowing when numerous brown spots are present. *Click on image to view a larger version. Photo: University of Illinois.*

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Bacterial blight. Photo: University of Illinois