Cherry leaf spot is a serious disease of sour cherries and can cause extensive defoliation. The moist, rainy weather we sometimes experience in Kentucky favors development of leaf spot disease. Loss of leaves reduces flower bud set for next year, weakens trees, and increases sensitivity to winter injury. Cherry leaf spot is caused by a fungus called *Coccomyces hiemalis*.

**Symptoms**

Small purple spots 1/8 to 1/4 inch in diameter appear on the leaves. On the under surfaces of the leaves, following heavy dew or rains, a white fungal growth (white spore masses called acervuli) may develop.

Affected leaves turn yellow and fall off early in the season, thereby reducing the vigor of the tree. In severe cases, trees may become nearly defoliated by mid-season.

**Disease Management**

Sprays for control of this disease are usually begun in spring, just after bloom, and are continued regularly until one or two weeks after harvest. Fungicides containing dodine, fenarimol, fenbuconazole, pyraclostrobin + boscalid, tebuconazole or triflumizole are effective in control of this disease.

For current fungicide recommendations, consult U.K. publication ID-92, “Fruit Tree Spray Guide.” In small plantings, leaves should be raked up and destroyed to reduce inoculum for the next season.

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