

HEALTHY SASSAFRAS LEAVES



SASSAFRAS WITH LAUREL WILT

Sudden tree death with red-brown leaves still attached



Streaks/ staining under bark



JULY 2019

FOREST HEALTH ALERT

LAUREL WILT ON SASSAFRAS

A NEW DISEASE, LAUREL WILT, HAS BEEN DETECTED IN SOUTHWESTERN KY WITH THE POTENTIAL TO RAPIDLY KILL SASSAFRAS TREES.

Laurel wilt is a fungal disease caused by the invasive pathogen *Raffaelea lauricola*. It is transmitted by the wood-boring redbay ambrosia beetle. In Kentucky, sassafras is likely to be the species most affected by laurel wilt although the fungus can also cause disease on spicebush. Be on the lookout for sassafras trees that have died suddenly, have dead red-brown leaves still attached, and have dark streaky staining in wood just under their bark.

Learn more:

forestry.ca.uky.edu/laurel-wilt

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Photo credit: Ansel Oommen, Bugwood.org, Albert (Bud) Mayfield, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org, Abe Nielsen, Kentucky Division of Forestry