The Case of the Big Black Spots

Situation: This cultivar of sweet viburnum has large glossy green leaves. It is commonly used as a screen or kept as a hedge. The plants in question, came from a nursery on the east coast of Florida and were planted three weeks before. Large black spots had recently developed on many leaves and were causing the worst affected leaves to fall. Inspection of the plants showed that the affected leaves were throughout the plant; top to bottom. Each spot measured approximately 0.5 inches in diameter. Leaf samples were sent to the plant pathology laboratory in Gainesville for analysis.

The Result: Cercospora sp. - Leaf Spot.

The Control: Leaf spots caused by this group of fungi can be troublesome to control in either the nursery or the landscape. The causal fungi reproduce primarily from the lower leaf surface. Thus, uniform fungicide applications on both leaf surfaces are extremely important to achieve control. Use of such fungicides as Banner Maxx, Systhane, Chlorothalonil, (Daconil, Thalonil, Consyst, Spectro 90 WDG), Mancozeb (Dithane, Fore, Protect T/O, etc.), Potassium Bicarbonate (Armicarb, etc.), or copper fungicide will aid in control of this disease when repeatedly applied. Check labels for plant clearances. Water and fertilize adequately to promote plant vigor.
Memo: Always follow label rates and recommendations when using pesticides. Test spray new pesticides or pesticides new to your facility on a small scale to check for plant safety before widespread use.

*Cercospora* leaf spots on Awabuki

*Cercospora* leaf spots on lower leaf surfaces