



IMPORTANT UPDATE ON BLOCKER FUNGICIDE IN POTATO

Wisconsin potato growers have relied on Blocker for common scab and Rhizoctonia control

By Amanda Gevens, professor and Extension specialist, University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison Department of Plant Pathology

In mid-December 2025, AMVAC Chemical Corporation, the manufacturer of the fungicide Blocker (pentachloronitrobenzene [PCNB]), decided to stop producing Blocker 4F and 10G. In effect, this concludes production of Blocker for the future.

The Blocker that is on the shelves at this time is all that will be available for future use. It is estimated that this will leave potato growers with a supply that may satisfy only 25-33% of the potato use demand in 2026.

Potato growers in Wisconsin have

relied upon Blocker for strong common scab and Rhizoctonia control and will face challenges in the 2026 growing season in planning for disease management.

Additional vegetable crop production uses of Blocker include crucifer (cabbage, broccoli) Rhizoctonia and Clubroot management.

While the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has, for several years, proposed canceling registrations of Blocker due to ecological and human health risk concerns, AMVAC ultimately made the decision to stop manufacturing Blocker.

There is no change to the registration of Blocker at this time, but access to this fungicide will be extremely limited in 2026 and non-existent beyond this year.

Blocker provides multi-site

Above: Dr. Amanda Gevens, UW Department of Plant Pathology, provides a potato disease research update at the 2025 Hancock Agricultural Research Station Field Day.

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interference with fungal metabolism and is an active protectant. The fungicide is a non-systemic, broad biocidal soil treatment and has minimal vapor action.

TARGET PATHOGENS

Blocker's target pathogens are true fungi including *Rhizoctonia solani* (stem canker, black scurf, wirestem), *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (white mold), and *Colletotrichum coccodes* (black dot).

Other true fungi target pathogens are a filamentous bacterium *Streptomyces scabies* and other *Streptomyces* species (common scab), and a plasmodiophorid

Plasmodiophora brassicae (club root).

Please note that the registration of Blocker 4F via chemigation (only) for potato white mold and black dot management is limited to Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

AMVAC Chemical Corporation is the company that makes and registers Blocker products (Blocker 4F and Blocker 10G). AMVAC markets a suite of fungicides with PCNB under several brand names including Blocker, Terraclor, Turfcide, and Premion in the United States.

AMVAC will stop production of all these products.

For vegetable crop disease management, two formulations of AMVAC's Blocker (4F and 10G) are registered. The differences are in formulation, not chemistry.

The 10G granular formulation treats a broader soil zone and has higher bulk. The 4F flowable formulation provides precision in placement with lower carrier volume.

Alternatives to Blocker for potato *Rhizoctonia* control:

Rhizoctonia control requires an integrated preventative approach including varietal tolerance, clean seed, avoiding planting into cold

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(ideally >45°F) and wet soils, allowing suberization time and conditions (50-55°F with good airflow) for cut seed, immediately treating cut seed with fungicides, and using in-furrow fungicides.

The seed-applied and in-furrow fungicides for use on *Rhizoctonia* include mancozeb (FRAC M3); benzovindiflupyr, flutolanil, fluxapyroxad, penthiopyrad and pydiflumetofen (FRAC 7);

azoxystrobin, pyraclostrobin, and trifloxystrobin (FRAC 11); and fludioxonil (FRAC 12).

Seed treatments and in-furrow treatments protect stems and stolons early, but do not eradicate soil inoculum. Encourage quick shoot emergence by choosing optimum planting times, conditions, and planting depth.

Rotate away from potatoes for 3-4

years and avoid rotations with other susceptible crops including beets and beans. Small grains and corn are best rotations to help reduce *Rhizoctonia* soilborne inoculum.

Alternatives to Blocker for potato Common Scab control:

Potato common scab requires an integrated and preventative approach for management.

Elements of management include use of tolerant or resistant varieties, maintenance of consistent soil moisture during tuber initiation (~3-4 weeks, avoid drying-rewetting cycles), management of soil pH to 5.0-5.2, crop rotation (3-4 years out of potatoes, beet, carrot, radish), use of seed with low or no common scab, avoidance of excess early nitrogen, maintenance of adequate calcium, and avoidance of over-application of manure before potatoes.

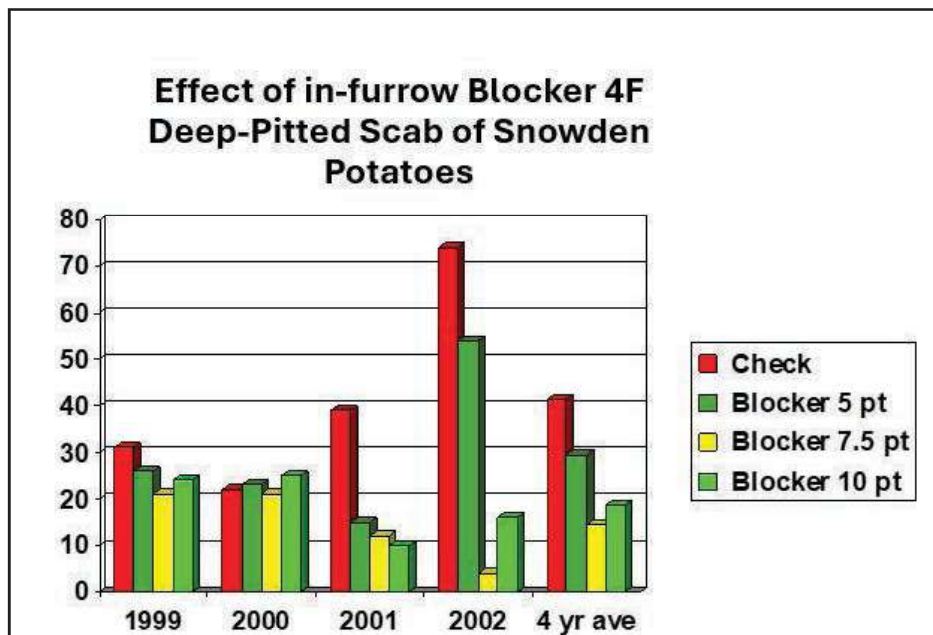
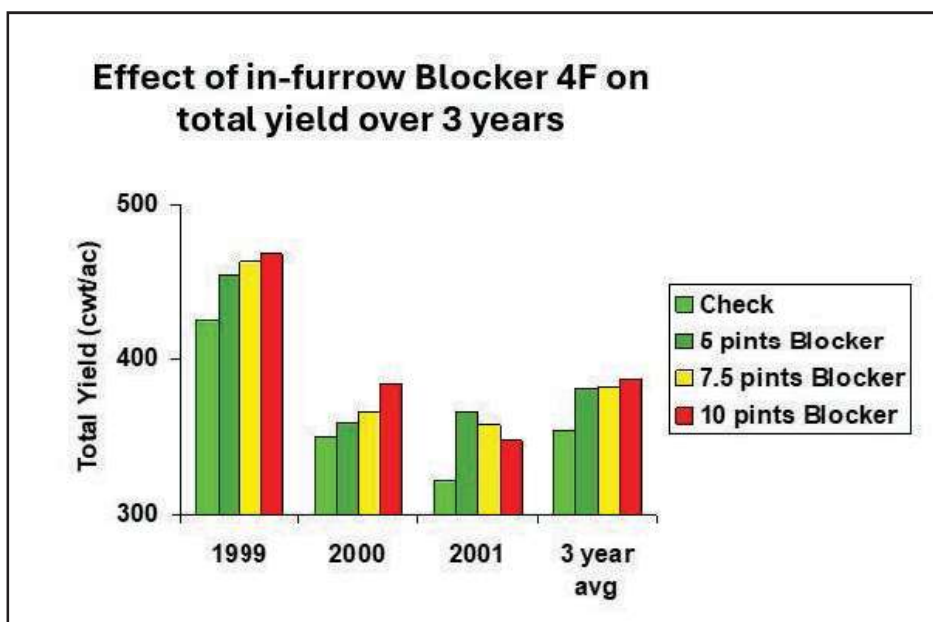
Chemical and biological inputs are generally variable in performance, but there are some with greater consistency in common scab management.

Fludioxonil (ie: Maxim) has demonstrated common scab control in past recent years. In our Wisconsin studies, our seed-applied fludioxonil treatments have not reduced common scab severity or incidence, but other locations have documented this outcome.

AS A SEED TREATMENT

When applied as a seed treatment in a Canadian study, fludioxonil reduced common scab incidence by 35%, and reduced common scab severity by 58%. The yield of marketable tubers increased by nearly 25% when compared to the non-treated control.

The study, which also offers evaluation of other biological fungicides and fumigants, can be found here: <https://www.tandfonline>.



com/doi/full/10.1080/09583157.2015.1079809.

As with all aspects of common scab management, effectiveness of any one parameter can vary by location. (The citation of this paper is: Al-Mughrabi, Vikram, Poirier, Jayasuriya, Moreau. 2015. Management of common scab of potato in the field using biopesticides, fungicides, soil additives, or soil fumigants. Biocontrol Science and Technology. Vol. 26(1):1-23).

Ralph Frederick of AMVAC has conducted field research on Blocker 4F rates for reducing common scab. In his work, he has found that the standard 10 pint/acre rate of Blocker 4F can be reduced to 7.5 pints/acre and result in effective common scab management and increased yield.

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– Amanda Gevens

His work showed that the 5-pint rate was less effective. To utilize the limited Blocker supply most efficiently, and across broadest acreage of susceptible potato crops in 2026 for common scab control, one option is to reduce the rate to 7.5 pints/acre.

*For further information or if you have any questions, please reach out to Ralph Frederick of AMVAC at RalphF@amvac.com or 218-340-1609 regarding Blocker or his rate work; or Amanda Gevens, UW-Plant Pathology at gevens@wisc.edu or 608-575-3029 regarding disease management in vegetables. **BC^T***



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