Blackleg scouting protocol:

- Wear rubber boots that are tall enough to cover your calf muscles, whenever you enter a field, since rubber boots can be disinfected readily with alcohol. If the crop height is lower than your boots, you only need to sterilize the boots after you leave each field and before entering the next field. When you finish scouting/sampling a field, scrape and wash off any soil adhering to the boots. Then spray the boots with 70% alcohol (ethyl alcohol works well) after you’ve removed all the soil. We have spray bottles with 70% alcohol in the vehicle.

- If the canopy is taller than the height of your boots, wear a Tyvek suit to cover your pants (and your waits/chest/arms if the canopy is tall enough), and then spray the legs of the suit (or any part of the suit that might have come into contact with the canopy) with alcohol after you exit the field.

- Place a plastic tarp (or similar fabric that can be washed and sterilized readily) in the vehicle onto which boots can be placed each time after they’ve been sterilized, along with any other sampling/scouting equipment that should be sterilized before being placed on the tarp.

- Keep a separate pair of clean shoes to wear when driving between fields, and make sure those shoes never touch soil or any other surface/substrate that might have come into contact with the black leg pathogen. This can be the tricky part – transferring from boots worn in the field to the clean shoes without getting the clean shoes contaminated (e.g., don’t walk in the new shoes over areas where you walked in the field boots prior to sterilizing the boots, including areas around the vehicle).

- Wear latex gloves when sampling/scouting, and put on a new pair of gloves for each field (or spray the gloves down thoroughly with 70% alcohol between fields).

- Put a trash container of some kind in the vehicle that is designated for discarded gloves, paper toweling you might have used to wipe off soil, etc. – anything that potentially could be contaminated with the black leg pathogen.

- At the end of the scouting trip, autoclave any waste material that could be contaminated with the black leg pathogen.