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Late Blight is Nearby ♦ Watch your Tomatoes and Potatoes

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Dr. Kenny Seebold, Extension Plant Pathologist at the University of Kentucky, has confirmed late blight on tomatoes from Boone County and Lexington retail operations. Interestingly, the plants in both locations came from Michigan. This MI operation may sell tomato seedlings in Ohio, mainly in the Cincinnati and Columbus areas, but the general manager informed me that its sales are pretty limited in Ohio. We have not confirmed late blight in Ohio yet.

Nonetheless, since we have reports of late blight on tomato seedlings from PA and KY already, we can assume that home gardeners have planted tomatoes with late blight in these neighboring states at least, and that the inoculum is not far away. Therefore we may see it sooner in Ohio than we did last year. Late blight thrives under cool, moist conditions; hot, dry weather suppresses the disease but does not make it go away entirely. We do not normally recommend that tomato growers begin fungicide applications this early in the season (some fields are not even planted yet!). ♦ However, application of protectant fungicides should be considered, particularly if cool, moist, rainy and/or foggy conditions appear. ♦ Tomato and potato fields should be scouted for late blight beginning now. ♦ Tomato seedlings being transplanted now should be thoroughly inspected for late blight symptoms. ♦ Recommendations for late blight management for commercial growers provided by Cornell University can be found in VegNet Vol. 16, #20-19 July 29, 2009.

Suspect tomato and potato plants should be confirmed by the OSU Plant Clinic

C. Wayne Ellett Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic

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or the OSU Vegetable Pathology Lab in Wooster.

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Home gardeners should remove plants with late blight from the garden, place them in a plastic bag and seal it tightly, then dispose of the bag. If they want to use a protectant fungicide, products containing chlorothalanyl can be helpful.

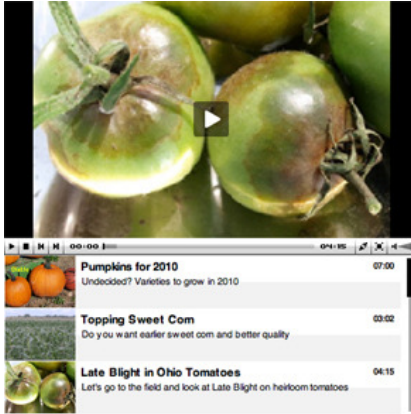




Late blight on upper (above) and lower (below) surface of tomato leaves.

Editors Note:

A short 4 minute video [from 2009](http://vegnet.osu.edu) in Bob's Video Vegetable Notes on the VegNet home page, <http://vegnet.osu.edu> is a good review of late blight symptoms on heirloom tomatoes. It is the third video down from the top. Remember this is from 2009 and not this year.



The Heat is On

AccuWeather.com Chief Long-Range Meteorologist Joe Bastardi is calling for a hot summer for most of the nation, with much warmer temperatures than the summer of 2009.

The latter part of the summer could be warmer than the beginning for much of the nation, with the exception of the West Coast, which could begin cooler in June.



"There will be substantial warmth for much of the U.S. this year," said Bastardi. "The warmest of the [summer months](#) relative to averages for the nation should be August and our forecast is for overall warmth to last into September."

Temperatures will be more than 3 degrees above normal from Colorado to western Texas and into the Southwest. This heat combined with a lack of moisture will result in a substantially increased wildfire risk.

In the Northeast, from interior Maine to western Virginia, temperatures several degrees above normal summer averages are expected. Above-normal June temperatures will highlight much of the nation.

"Pockets of cooler-than-normal air may be a problem in June near the coasts," Bastardi said. "Most of the nation will be at or above normal and certainly warmer than last June."

However, those seeking a better chance for cooler weather this summer should be advised to head towards the West Coast or extreme northern Plains.

With increased numbers of thunderstorms across the northern half of the Mississippi Valley, there could be also some cooling as the summer progresses. Bastardi suggests that it will not be as cool as the summer of 2009 in these regions.



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