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## Late Blight in Tomatoes in Northwestern Pennsylvania

Sally Miller, The Ohio State University Department of Plant Pathology, May 21, 2010

Dr. Beth Guigino, Vegetable Pathology Specialist at Penn State University, reported yesterday that late blight was confirmed on locally grown greenhouse tomato transplants in northwestern PA. ♦ This follows reports of outbreaks in Louisiana, Florida and Maryland. ♦♦ The symptomatic plants in Pennsylvania have been destroyed and the grower has adopted a fungicide spray program to manage the disease. ♦ The inoculum source has not been identified. ♦ The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has been screening tomato transplants received for wholesale and retail markets in the state and so far none have been identified as having late blight.

Given the cool and rainy weather conditions of the past several weeks, which favor late blight, it is a good idea to alert growers and gardeners alike of the potential for the disease to occur in Ohio. ♦ Late blight does not survive the winter in Ohio unless it is protected in living plant tissue. ♦ A possible source of inoculum at this time of year is volunteer potato plants that were infected last season. ♦ Volunteer potatoes should be destroyed as soon as they emerge, particularly if late blight was observed in the area last year. ♦ Gardeners should watch the space where potatoes were planted last year and remove and destroy any potato plants that emerge. ♦ Commercial growers planting corn after potatoes may consider several herbicide options (<http://ipmnews.msu.edu/vegetable/>).

When purchasing potato seed or tomato transplants, growers and gardeners alike should inspect the planting material carefully and reject any with disease symptoms. ♦ Fungicides are available for management of late blight but in general must be applied before the disease appears. ♦ For gardeners, products containing the active ingredient chlorothalanyl are recommended. ♦ Read the label carefully and apply the fungicide according to label requirements. ♦ Commercial growers have a number of products available to them. ♦ Tomato late blight management recommendations for gardeners and growers (conventional and organic) are available in VegNet 16(14), June 25, 2009 (<http://vegnet.osu.edu/news/currentvn1409.htm>).

## Kerb 50-W ♦ Update to the Lettuce Industry

Adriana M. Ratterman, Portfolio Marketing Leader. Dow AgroSciences

It has been several months since Dow AgroSciences and the lettuce industry suddenly lost the label for use of Kerb 50-W on leaf lettuce. Since late last year, Dow AgroSciences has been working with EPA to establish a path toward securing a registration on leaf lettuce. Some new studies are complete while others are in progress. Dow AgroSciences is committed to defending Kerb on leaf lettuce with the EPA and reinstating this important use. Dow AgroSciences understands the value Kerb brings to lettuce growers and is making a significant investment to bring the product back to the leaf lettuce market. While we do not know the exact date for a return to the market, the estimated timing is third quarter 2012.

Thank you for your patience and support. If you have further questions, please contact your local Dow AgroSciences sales representative.

## FDA Produce Safety Rule Comment Rule Extended,

As you know, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has taken the unusual and critically important step of soliciting comments on its proposed produce safety rule before it is actually published.

The deadline for comments was to be May 24, 2010, but FDA announced this week that **it will extend that deadline until July 23, 2010.**

We appreciate the time you took to attend our meetings and voice your concerns, and we will be submitting to the FDA next week summaries of all of our meetings. They will also be available on our Web site: [www.producesafetyproject.org](http://www.producesafetyproject.org).

But it is vitally important for the FDA to hear from you. If you have not submitted a comment, please consider doing so. The sooner you can do so, the better so FDA will have time to consider your comment and seek additional information and data related to your comment. Attached is the Federal Register notice about the extension; also, please feel free to contact us if we can help you in any way.

Here is the text of an email we received from FDA about the additional time for comments; it notes a number of areas of special interest for the Agency:

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is extending to July 23, 2010, the comment period for a notice that appeared in the Federal Register of February 23, 2010. In that notice, FDA established a docket (FDA-2010-N-0085) to receive comments and information about current practices and conditions for the production and packing of fresh produce. The Agency is extending this comment period to give all interested parties additional time to provide the information requested by FDA in that notice. Comments will inform the development of safety standards for fresh produce at the farm and packing house and strategies and cooperative efforts to ensure compliance. The Agency will use all comments and perspectives to develop a proposed rule on safety standards for fresh produce.

Many comments have already come in -- but there's still time to make your voice heard and to share with FDA your views and recommendations on areas such as:

The role of the good agricultural practice (GAP) guidelines, "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables"

How to coordinate produce food safety practices with

- sustainable and/or organic production methods
- environmental and/or conservation goals or practices

Again, please don't hesitate to contact us at 202-687-2976 or [cch48@georgetown.edu](mailto:cch48@georgetown.edu) with any questions.

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