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## **Listening Sessions to be Held to Help Guide Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement, ♦From OPGMA**

The Ohio Department of Agriculture recently announced the grant funding of The USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. OPGMA was awarded funding for the development of an ♦Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement. ♦OPGMA has begun developing an Ohio specific food safety standard for fresh produce that takes into consideration the climate, commodities, and cultural practices unique to state fresh fruit and vegetable growers.

The Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement is currently in development. A series of listening sessions have been set up (final one will be at the Congress) during which they will be listening to thoughts, questions, and concerns of Ohio growers around the state. It is after that point that the formal drafting of the agreement will begin. It will be completed no later than mid-year next year. A major differentiation that is envisioned for the Ohio agreement is that unlike the National agreement, the Ohio version would be tiered. The top level would be very comparable to the National agreement that in reality only the very large wholesale growers can meet, the other levels would target small, Amish, and other growers appropriately address food safety issues in a manner that shouldn't threaten business survival.

While there are currently several proposed marketing agreements and regulatory programs in the development process, all of them are national standards based on a one-size-fits-all model. OPGMA will be conducting seven ♦listening sessions♦ around the state to inform Ohio growers about the national proposals the ♦The Ohio Project,♦ which is an alternative to the proposed national standards.

The intent of these listening sessions are to:

1. Provide a food safety update on proposed national programs and how they would affect Ohio growers.
2. Explain the Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement how it would provide an alternative to the national programs.
3. Outline the action steps for an individual grower or operation should take to prepare and protect one's business
4. Answer questions and receive input regarding the design and implementation of an Ohio Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement.

Each session will be hosted by an individual site manager. The presentation and Q&A will be moderated by an OPGMA Board member. The primary presenter is Dr. Karl Kolb, Chief Science officer of The High Sierra Group, and a member of The OSU Food Safety Team.

## **Listening Session Schedule**

### **Northeast Ohio**

Tuesday, November 10, 6-8 p.m., Mt. Hope Auction, Mt Hope, Ohio, Host: Raymond Yoder

Friday, November 13, 8-10 a.m., Hilton Garden Inn Garnet Room #2, 4900 Emerald Ct. SW, Cleveland, Ohio, Host: Bill Dodd, OAMP/FGMA

### **Northwest Ohio**

♦Wednesday, November 11, 9-11 a.m., ABE Center, 639 S Dunbridge Rd Suite # 4, Bowling Green, Ohio, Host: Beth Fausey

### **Southwest Ohio**

Wednesday, November 11, 5-7 p.m., Valley Vineyards, 2276 E. U.S. 22&3 (Montgomery Road), Morrow, Ohio, Host: Brad Begefurd

### **South Central Ohio**

Thursday, November 12, 9-11 a.m., Cynthiana Township Hall, Bainbridge, Ohio, Host: Fred Weaver, Bainbridge Produce Auction Manager

### **Southeast Ohio**

Thursday, November 12, 2-4 p.m., OSU Athens County, 280 W Union St, Athens, Ohio, Host: Hal Kneen & Rory Lewandowski

## **OPGMA Congress**

Wednesday January 20, Kalahari Convention Center, Sandusky, Ohio,  
Host: Richard Wander, OPGMA President

## **For More information**

The National Leafy Green Marketing Agreement. <http://nlgma.org/>

The text of the agreement can be found at the following website:

[http://nlgma.org/documents/New\\_LGMA\\_Proposed\\_Text.pdf](http://nlgma.org/documents/New_LGMA_Proposed_Text.pdf)

Why Does Ohio Need A Fresh Produce Marketing Agreement? <http://www.ohiofruit.org/?q=why>



## ◆ Tomato and Potato Late Blight Management for Fall, Winter and Spring Amanda J. Gevens

Extension Plant Pathologist, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, Ruth Hazzard, University of Massachusetts Extension Vegetable Program and Sally Miller, OSU, Plant Pathology

[Editors Note: The following is taken from several sources to answer some general questions that tomato growers might have if they had late blight in 2009. While much of the information is directed to gardeners and organic tomato production, the principles apply to all commercial tomato producers]

### Do we get Late Blight every year?

No. This fungus does well in the cool wet weather like we have had in the north east and many parts of the mid-west this summer.

### Where did this late blight come from?

Inoculum (source of spores for late blight infection) entered the state from infected tomato plants and on air that had moved from other nearby states with reports of late blight on tomato and potato. The late blight pathogen produces a lot of spores on infected plants and spores can move in air up to 40 miles.

### How do I destroy and/or dispose of my late blight-infected tomato plants?

There are several methods of destroying infected plants. Infected plants can be buried but be sure to avoid creating a warm, sheltered environment which would keep the plant tissue and pathogen alive for extended periods of time beneath the surface of the soil (such as a deep compost pile). The goal is to kill the plants: once the plants are dead, the pathogen cannot survive. Do not bury a large pile of plants in one hole; rather, make a shallow trench away from production areas and lay plants and debris in, then cover.

### Can I Compost the infected plants?

No, we do not recommend composting these plants as composting will not kill this fungus for the reasons mentioned above.

The 2009 gardening season will be remembered for the widespread outbreak of late blight, *Phytophthora infestans*, in tomato and potatoes. As the season draws to a close, it is time for gardeners to take steps to prevent this disease from surviving the winter, and to prepare for a healthy crop next year.

### Will late blight survive the winter?

The fungus *Phytophthora infestans* needs live tissue to survive. Potato tubers that are infected with late blight and don't freeze or decay during the winter can carry the pathogen over the winter to next spring. Tubers can survive in several ways:

- Left in the ground at harvest, down several inches in the soil.
- Disposed of in a compost pile that does not fully decompose and does not freeze.
- Disposed of in a large pile of culled potatoes, which does not freeze completely.
- Kept in storage until late winter, and then put outside in spring.
- Purchased for home use, and then disposed of (in compost or cull pile, as above)

Potatoes that freeze or fully decompose will not carry the pathogen overwinter.

Tomatoes will not carry late blight over the winter, because freezing kills the whole plant. Tomato seed, even from fruit that was infected with late blight, will not carry the pathogen. Thus you can use your own seed or purchase seed to start next year's crop without fear of late blight. Certain perennial weeds can become infected with late blight, but none of their above ground tissues live through the winter. Greenhouses where tomatoes were grown could allow survival only if they never freeze and the crop lives all winter. Late blight will not survive on tomato stakes and cages.

In some parts of the world, late blight has two mating types (the fungal equivalent of male and female) which can produce long-lasting oospores that survive independently. So far, only one mating type has been found in the Northeast so we do not expect oospores to be present.

### Harvest and storage

Healthy tomato fruit from infected plants may be used right away or stored till use. Tomato flavor is best preserved above 50 degrees F, though this may also allow late blight and other disease symptoms to develop after harvest. Late blight produces large, greenish brown greasy-appearing spots that cover part or all of the fruit. These are firm, not soft. Under the skin, tissue is discolored.

◆ On potato tubers, late blight causes a shallow, granular reddish-brown dry rot that invades the flesh in an irregular fashion. These infections may open the way to bacterial soft rot, which breaks down the whole tuber into a gooeey, smelly mess. Other tuber diseases that may be confused with late blight include pink eye and Fusarium dry rot. Black scurf (caused by *Rhizoctonia solani*) causes small, hard, black, raised structures on the surface ◆ the dirt that won't wash off ◆. Not every tuber problem is caused by late blight!

### What to do next spring

**Tomatoes:** Select disease-resistant varieties for at least some of your crop, and buy disease-free seed. ◆ Mountain Magic ◆, ◆ Plum Regal ◆, and ◆ Legend ◆ are three varieties with resistance or tolerance to late blight. Growing your own transplants or purchasing from a reputable grower will ensure a healthy start to the season. Inspect all transplants for stem, petiole cankers or leaf blight before planting.

**Potatoes:** If you had late blight symptoms in your garden, do not save tubers as seed to be planted next spring. Purchase certified disease-free potato seed from a reputable source, and ask your supplier about their source of seed and if it was inspected in the field for late blight. In the spring (April ◆ June), inspect last year's potato plot and any compost or cull piles for volunteer potato plants that might come up. If you find potato plants, pull them out and put them in the trash or destroy them. If tubers were infected and survive, then the late blight could grow upward from the tuber, infecting the stem and producing spores when weather conditions are favorable. These spores could then disperse to other tomato and potato plants. During the growing season, pay attention to weather conditions and pest alerts to learn about whether late blight has been observed in Ohio, and what actions you need to take to protect your crop. Dr. Miller has provided a list of recommended fungicides for late blight control in <http://vegnet.osu.edu/news/currentvn2009.htm> and in the 2010 Ohio Vegetable Production Guide available in mid-to-late January 2010

## Winter Outlook, From: Accuweather.com

*Editor's Note: If you thought this was the year without summer and it took forever for sweet corn to mature or tomatoes to ripen, then check out the 2009-2010 winter outlook.*

According to AccuWeather.com's Chief Meteorologist and Expert Long Range Forecaster Joe Bastardi, winter will be centered over an area from Maryland to the Carolinas as a fading El Niño results in the stormiest and coldest pattern in recent years.

Bastardi predicts the current El Niño will fade over the winter and will probably not have as much of a role in the overall weather pattern as one would think during a typical El Niño year.

This fading El Niño pattern will lead to a stormier and colder winter in the southern and eastern United States. While the El Niño is fading this winter, other factors are pointing to a winter very similar to that of 2002-2003.



The traditional lake-effect areas of western New York may see local variations of heavier snows. Bastardi adds that while these areas will have a normal winter, the areas farther south that have escaped from the snow and cold the past couple of winters will see the worst winter conditions in the form of snow and cold.



The storm track that could develop this year will bring storms into Southern California, then across the South and up the Eastern Seaboard. That track will lead to the normal amount of nor'easters from Cape Hatteras to New Jersey.



This type of storm track will differ from that of the past two years, when storms tended to take a track farther west from Texas into the Great Lakes. That track into the Great Lakes brought unseasonably mild weather to the major East Coast cities, keeping them on the rainy side of the storms