

TOMATO AND POTATO LATE BLIGHT ALERT



WHAT EVERY GROWER
NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT
TOMATO AND POTATO
LATE BLIGHT

MICHIGAN
Potato Diseases 
www.potatodiseases.org

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MICHIGAN POTATO
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This year the disease known as late blight has affected tomato and potato crops throughout the northern states. Once the disease has taken hold of the plant there is very little that can be done to halt its progress to other plants other than destruction of the affected plants. Unaffected plants can be protected with fungicides.

- New strains of this disease can infect and kill plants within 10 days.
- The disease can survive inside potato tubers resulting in infected volunteer potatoes in the spring.
- The disease can spread from potato to tomato to potato plants and to surrounding gardens and commercial fields early in the growing season.
- The spores of this disease can be carried in the air.
- In the past, losses of potatoes due to late blight have caused farming businesses to close throughout Michigan.

What can you do?

Tomatoes and Potatoes

- Leave diseased tubers and waste tomatoes on the surface of the ground to freeze over winter.
- **Fungicides are available for small growers and gardeners that can prevent the disease from spreading between plants and crops. Such products are Daconil or Manzate (home gardeners) or an alternative would be Echo 720 (farmers).**
- Time watering plants to allow a drying period during the day.
- Fungicides should be applied every seven days or as directed on the label. Apply in water at a rate of 50 gal/A.
- Copper fungicides are less effective than those mentioned above but will help on plants that are not infected (can mix Coppers with Daconil/Echo).
- If symptoms develop (such as those on the front page) pull up the diseased plant from the roots, place in a plastic bag, seal the bag and dispose of the bag without reopening it. The spores of this disease can be carried in the air.
- Check plants daily and dispose of diseased plants immediately.
- Destroy affected plants with Reglone or other like product (farmers) if removal is not possible.
- In early spring, do not spread waste potatoes outside, they can survive this period as can the disease.
- In spring and summer destroy plants that have symptoms like those on the photographs on the front page.

Potatoes

- After harvest, check tubers regularly as infected tubers can quickly decompose. Discard infected tubers in a sealed plastic bag.

Professional/commercial growers have difficulty growing disease-free crops. Please help to maintain businesses and jobs in your area by following the above guidelines.

Michigan Department of Agriculture has the authority to declare an area a nuisance and to eliminate the source of late blight inoculum in order to prevent the spread of disease to farmers' crops.

For further assistance contact your local County Cooperative Extension Office and for more information on potato late blight go to <http://lateblight.org>.