

Pest Alert

Late Blight

Late Blight Damage Can Occur Quickly in Gardens

Late Blight is a common and very destructive disease of potatoes, tomatoes and other crops in the *Solanaceae* family. Also affected are petunias, nightshades and vegetables including eggplants and peppers. In the 1850's, Late Blight caused the disastrous Irish Potato Famine that caused widespread starvation in Ireland.

Since the spores that cause Late Blight are both wind and soil borne, a carefully managed garden where plant debris are removed each year, and where disease symptoms are recognized and quickly acted on are the most effective ways to prevent the disease from occurring.

In areas where Late Blight has been observed, continuous monitoring for signs of the disease, especially during wet weather can stop an infestation quickly if any symptoms are observed. Symptoms on tomatoes include black lesions beginning from 3-7 days of wet weather. Active lesions are often surrounded by a ring of whitish spores at the edge of the ring. Brown or black lesions also occur on the stem between leaf and fruit, and on the fruit itself.

Late Blight is controlled well with fungicides containing chlorothalonil such as Bonide Fung-Onil products. These are available in both a concentrate and easy to use spray bottle for spot treatment.

Fungicides containing manganese are also effective in controlling Late Blight in plants. **Bonide Mancozeb** fungicide is one such product, and is commonly recommended by universities and co-operative extension offices for the control of Late Blight.

Gardeners who are looking for natural controls for Late Blight can use one of several copper based fungicides from Bonide. **Bonide Copper Fungicide Dust**, and **Copper Fungicide Liquid** in both concentrate and ready to use formulations are approved for organic gardening by the USDA.

When applying chemical controls for blight on edible crops, be sure to follow the label directions including frequency of application and time to harvest recommendations.



Late Blight Facts:

- Disease spores are airborne, and can also be washed into the soil to affect the roots of the plant
- Late Blight caused the Irish Potato famine in the 1850s
- Windborne spores can travel great distances
- *Can also affect potato, eggplant and peppers in the garden*
- Can wipe out all plants in a very short time if conditions are right
- Has been well controlled by fungicides
- In 1980's new strains of fungus developed which are less well controlled by some fungicides

Bonide Control Products for Late Blight



Fung-Onil Products

- Contains chlorothalonil
- Fast acting to control common diseases
- Works on contact
- Use on vegetables
- RTU or Concentrate



Mancozeb Flowable

- Contains zinc and manganese
- Broad spectrum disease control
- 2-5 tsp. per gallon
- OK for vegetables



Copper Fungicides

- Liquids – Copper Octanoate
- Dust – Copper Sulfate
- Approved for organic gardening
- Use for vegetables and fruit
- Controls blights and more!