

The University of Maryland Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Profitability Impact Team proudly presents this bi-weekly publication for the commercial vegetable and fruit industry.

Issue #6 June 3, 2010

## Casual Observations from Southern Maryland

By Ben Beale  
Extension Educator & CED, Agriculture  
St. Mary's County

- ✓ Outside field plantings in general look good: Farmers are busy weeding, cultivating, spraying and beginning to harvest early season crops.
- ✓ Vine crops are beginning to run and early sweet corn has tasseled.
- ✓ High tunnel tomatoes, cukes and squash are in full swing now.
- ✓ Cucumber beetles in cucurbits, timber rot and late blight in tomatoes and worm pressure in cole crops are the current main pest concerns.



## Late Blight Update

By Kate Everts  
Extension Vegetable Plant Pathologist &  
Professor UME

### Late Blight Update – June 4, 2010

Unfortunately late blight has continued to appear in tomatoes over the past week. Locally, a second high tunnel outbreak in St. Mary's county, MD was confirmed last week. This is the second confirmation in Maryland and is about one mile from the first outbreak. So far no other outbreaks in Maryland and none in Delaware have been reported. In other states, an outbreak in a Pennsylvania greenhouse was confirmed on May 17 (that crop was destroyed).

In northern Kentucky on May 27, infected transplants were found in one home garden and several box stores. These transplants had been grown outside of Kentucky and shipped to the box stores for sale. The stores involved are national chains. The transplants, which are destined for home gardens,

pose a huge threat because they would provide widespread dispersal of inoculum. We hope to avoid a recurrence of this scenario, which caused widespread commercial losses in 2009. Everyone is encouraged to be vigilant. If late blight is suspected – please contact your extension educator.

Again I am recommending that commercial tomato growers apply a protectant fungicide such as chlorothalonil (Bravo), Gavel, or mancozeb. Scout aggressively for symptoms and switch to more targeted translaminar products when late blight is found.



## MELCAST: Forecasting for Gummy Stem Blight on Watermelon and Alternaria Leaf Blight on Cantaloupe.

By Kate Everts  
Extension Vegetable Plant Pathologist & Professor UME

Forecasts for fungicide applications in watermelon and cantaloupes for the 2010 season are set to begin on Friday, June 4. If you have not received forecasts in the past and would like to receive them, please call Mrs. Jeri Cook (410-742-8788) and give her your email address. Locations will remain the same as last year. Maryland forecasts are for Woodbine, Waldorf, Galestown and Hebron. Delaware forecasts are for Coverdale Crossroads and both northeast and southwest of Laurel. To use MELCAST, select weather data for the site closest to your farm.

Instructions on use of MELCAST are available at:  
<http://mdveqdissease.umd.edu/forecasting/index.cfm>

# Plant Growth Regulator Herbicide Injury on Tomato

By Dave Myers  
Extension Educator & CED, Agriculture  
Anne Arundel County

Our vegetable crops range in susceptibility to plant growth regulator (PGR) herbicide injury, with tomatoes often recognized in the field as highly sensitive.

Table 1 reveals the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) Group 4 herbicides PGR herbicides as part of the three chemical families: phenoxy, benzoic acids and pyridines.

Table 1

## WSSA Group 4 Growth Regulators Synthetic Auxins

Phenoxy	Benzoic Acids	Pyridines
2,4-D (many trade names)	Dicamba (Banvel, Clarity, Distinct, Vanquish, Status, many others)	Picloram (Tordon, Grazon P&D)
2,4-DB		Triclopyr (Garlon, Remedy)
MCPA		Clopyralid (Stinger, Transline, Hornet)
2,4-DP (diclorprop)		Aminopyralid (Milestone, Forefront)
2,4,5-T (no longer marketed)		

The phenoxy and benzoic acids are subject to volatilization if temperatures exceed 85° F for up to 3-days following application. Documented volatilization losses of as much as 60% of the applied active ingredient has occurred. A concentrated vapor cloud may travel considerable distance before settling into a field pocket of sensitive crops. The pyridines are not subject to volatilization; but, are more likely to persist in the soil or be applied unknowingly as a manure or compost derived from a treated crop field or pasture.

The photo below reveals a tomato with severely damaged growing point tissue from a suspected PGR herbicide. Tomatoes expressing such complete damage are highly unlikely to recover enough to be productive, and should be replanted as long as the soil has not also been contaminated.



Image courtesy of R. D. Myers

# FDA Extended the Deadline to Comment on Food Safety Standards for Agricultural Produce

In the Federal Register of February 23, 2010 (75 FR 8086), FDA announced the opening of a docket to obtain information about current practices and conditions for the production and packing of fresh produce. FDA established this docket to provide an opportunity for interested persons to provide comments and information and share views that will inform the development of safety standards for fresh produce at the farm and packing house and strategies and cooperative efforts to ensure compliance. FDA is extending the comment period until **July 23, 2010**. The agency believes that this additional time is necessary to give interested parties sufficient time to respond to the general topic categories set forth in the February notice. The agency will consider information submitted to the docket in developing safety standards for fresh produce.

**DATES:** Submit electronic or written comments by **July 23, 2010**.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to; The Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

**Submit electronic comments to**

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

or

<http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#documentDetail?R=0900006480af134b>

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Michelle A. Smith, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (HFS-317), Food and Drug Administration, 5100 Paint Branch Pkwy., College Park, MD 20740-3835, 301-436-2024.

This proposed regulations will impact worker health and hygiene; composting and animal manure; standards for irrigation and agriculture use water. Moreover, size of the operations, specific commodities and regional characteristics need to be considered and evaluated to sort out the standards.

University of Maryland Extension highly encourages our growers and agriculture industry stake holders to write to FDA about your concerns and suggestions to this proposed food safety compliance. This will help the federal agencies understand your operations to better formulate the rules. This is your opportunity to tell the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the best way to develop safety standards for the growing, harvesting and packing of fresh fruits and vegetables.

**Submitted by Sudeep Mathew**  
Extension Educator, Agriculture  
Dorchester County



**Thanks for partnering with University of Maryland Extension, and supporting our programs.**

### ***Vegetable & Fruit Headline News***

A bi-weekly publication for the commercial vegetable and fruit industry available electronically in 2010 from March through September on the following dates: March 18; April 1 & 15; May 6 & 20; June 3 & 17; July 8 & 22; August 5 & 19; September 2 & 16.

**Published by the University of Maryland  
Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Profitability Impact Team**

**Submit Articles to:**

Editor,  
R. David Myers, Extension Educator  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
7320 Ritchie Highway, Suite 210  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061  
410 222-6759  
[myersrd@umd.edu](mailto:myersrd@umd.edu)

**Article submission deadlines for 2010:** March 17 & 31; April 14; May 5 & 19; June 2 & 16; July 7 & 21; August 4 & 18; September 1 & 15.