

# Potato late blight

Late blight can be very devastating to all aboveground plant parts of tomato. Leaf lesions first appear on as irregular, water-soaked spots, which enlarge rapidly into pale green to brown lesions, and cover large areas of the leaf. In moist weather, the lower surface of leaves with lesions may be covered with a gray to white moldy growth. Infected foliage becomes brown, shrivels, and soon dies. Petioles and stems are affected in a similar manner, so the entire plant may die. Fruit lesions appear as dark, green, greasy spots, which may enlarge until the entire fruit is invaded. A thin layer of white fungal growth may cover the fruit lesions during moist weather. Decaying vines will have a foul odor.

## Management Approaches

### Biological Control

No effective biological control strategies have been developed for late blight.

### Cultural Control

Plant materials serve as inoculum sources for nearby fields. Cultural controls include elimination of potato cull piles in the vicinity of tomato plantings and destroying volunteer potato plants.

### Chemical Control

Fungicides can play a key role in the management of late blight in tomato, especially when the weather is favorable. Several late blight forecasting systems have been developed to help in the timing of fungicide sprays when inoculum is present and conditions threaten. Fungicides are most effective when used in combination with cultural control strategies.