

Fusarium Wilt on Greenhouse Tomatoes

Introduction

Fusarium wilt on greenhouse tomatoes is caused by *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. lycopersici*. Tomato is the major host; eggplant and several weeds can also become infected. The target audience of this factsheet is commercial greenhouse growers.

Symptoms

At first, lower leaves turn yellow and wilt, especially during the heat of the day. Older leaves drop and turn downward. Wilted leaves turn brown and die. Often, one side of a leaf midrib or branches on one side of a plant will be affected. However, symptoms will spread to the entire plant. Wilted leaves drop prematurely. Not all greenhouse tomato varieties are susceptible.

If you cut the tomato stem open crosswise, the vascular tissue is brown with brownish streaks up and down the stem. However, the pith of the tomato stem is not affected. Greenhouse tomatoes may become infected at all stages of development, but symptoms may be more obvious during or shortly after flowering. The disease may be seed-borne.



Figure 1: Wilting of lower tomato leaves. Photo by L. Pundt; Figure 2: A discolored ring of vascular tissue in a cross-section of tomato stem. Photo by Y. Li, CAES



Figure 3: Discoloration of vascular tissues in a tomato stem. Photo by Y. Li, CAES

Bacterial canker can also cause the plants to wilt. When the stem is cut at the base of the plant, look for yellowish to white bacterial ooze. Bird's eyespots develop on the fruit.

Causal Agent

Fusarium wilt is caused by *Fusarium oxysporum f. sp. lycopersici*.

Management

- Select disease resistant varieties. See [Cornell Vegetables Disease Resistant Varieties](#)
- Use disease free seed and transplants.
- Practice proper greenhouse sanitation.
- Rogue out affected plants.

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References

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Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. (OMFRA) Staff. 2010. Growing Greenhouse Vegetables in Ontario. Publication No. 0836E. 160 pp.

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