

Late blight occurs sporadically determined by presence of pathogen. Other factors needed for any disease to develop (susceptible plants and favorable conditions) occur every season. Wet weather is especially favorable.

### *Where does the pathogen come from?*

1. Infected potato seed tubers or overwintering potato tubers (most important).
2. Spores moved by wind (usually within 30 miles of a disease outbreak).
3. Infected tomato seedlings grown in another area where late blight was active.
4. Infected petunia seedlings (rare; only one known case).

Soil treatments are not suitable because dormant spores are not known to be produced by the pathogen in the USA at this time.



## USAblight.org

Is a national project to reduce the impact of late blight through education, research on the pathogen, and developing resistant varieties, decision support system and other management tools.

### *Help Monitor Late Blight!*

Occurrences confirmed at plant clinics will be used to track development of late blight in the USA.



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## Effectively growing Tomatoes & Potatoes requires understanding and responding to Late Blight



This is a 'community disease' because it is very destructive (it led to the Irish Potato Famine) and it is highly contagious among plants. The pathogen produces many spores easily dispersed by wind.



Left unmanaged, even a small outbreak can lead to a major late blight epidemic affecting gardens and farms throughout a region, increasing risk for crop and economic loss.

## How to manage late blight:

1. Select resistant tomato varieties (e.g. Defiant, Mt Magic, Mt Merit, and Plum Regal) and certified seed potato (note: while 'certified' means less chance of infection, no seed is guaranteed to be pathogen-free).
2. Destroy cull potato tubers and plants that grow from cull and unharvested tubers (best: bag then trash).
3. Apply fungicides weekly. Understand symptoms cannot be cured plus this disease can develop rapidly; so late blight is harder to manage when fungicides are applied starting after symptoms are seen then before. For those who prefer not to use any fungicides, understand that late blight cannot be left unmanaged because of the potential impact on others' plants; destroy affected plants as soon as



the disease is identified. Copper is a good choice for organically-produced plants; chlorothalonil is the most effective conventional fungicide ingredient available to gardeners. Before using any fungicide, read entire label and understand the safety information.

4. Learn symptoms and inspect plants at least weekly after planting.
5. Submit suspect plants or tubers promptly to local diagnostic clinic. Riverhead, New York: 631-727-7850  
423 Griffing Avenue  
<http://ccesuffolk.org/horticulture-diagnostic-laboratories/>
6. If late blight is confirmed, promptly:
  - bag, bury, or destroy affected plant tissue in another way,
  - do not compost plants with late blight,
  - notify neighbors, and
  - continue applying fungicides weekly if plants are kept.



7. Visit <http://usablight.org/> to learn more about late blight, its symptoms and management (including resistant varieties), and for current information on late blight outbreaks.

