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*Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg. Agricultural Extension Service,*  
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## SPRAYING AND DUSTING TOMATOES FOR DISEASE CONTROL

If wet, cool weather prevails, it will be necessary to spray or dust the tomato crop to protect it from late blight and other leafspot diseases. The degree of control obtained will depend on the use of proper fungicides, promptness in starting the application, thoroughness of coverage of plants, and the application of the fungicide often enough to keep the plants protected.

SPRAY OR DUST ? Either of these methods of applying the fungicide will give satisfactory control. Spraying, however, is usually more effective and cheaper than dusting. While dusting does not give quite as good control as spraying and is also more expensive, it is more convenient and quicker to apply.

WHAT TO USE — Although copper fungicides are most generally used to control late blight, a number of newer organic compounds, such as Dithane, Parzate, Manzate, and Orthocide 406 are also effective in late blight control.

The new organic fungicides should be used according to the recommendations of the manufacturers. The neutral copper spray materials are much easier to prepare than Bordeaux mixture and they are less liable to cause injury to tomatoes. The neutral coppers are marketed under various trade names, such as Cuprocid, Copper Hydro, Cupro-K, Tri-basic Copper Sulphate, Robertson's Copper Fungicide, etc. Since they contain different amounts of copper, they should be used as recommended by the manufacturers.

If flea or potato beetles are causing damage, methoxychlor may be used in the sprays in the proportion of 2 level tablespoonfuls to 50 percent wettable powder to 1 gallon of spray or it may be used in the dusts at 3 to 5 percent strength.

HOW TO SPRAY OR DUST -- Thorough spraying or dusting is essential for satisfactory control. Good spraying or dusting equipment should be used and the nozzle adjusted so that the plants are thoroughly covered. Dusting should be done only when the air is quiet. Usually the best time to dust is early in the morning or late in the evening.

Sprays should be applied every 7 to 10 days and dusts every 5 to 7 days. When rains occur frequently, it is necessary to spray or dust more often in order to keep the plants covered with the fungicide for continuous protection. Six to ten or more applications are required for tomatoes, depending upon the kind of weather that prevails.

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