

Tomato Leaf Mould

Species: *Fulvia fulva* (ex *Cladosporium fulvum*)

Description

Tomato leaf mould disease, caused by the fungus *Fulvia fulva*, mainly affects glasshouse tomatoes.

Leaf mould disease almost exclusively affects the leaves, causing indirect yield losses. However, on rare occasions, the disease can also affect fruits, blossoms, and stems. In this case, there is a direct loss in yield.

Symptoms

What does the disease look like?

The disease presents itself as velvety olive-green to brown spots of mould on the underside of the leaf.

Diffuse light-yellow spots are often visible on the upper and lower leaf surfaces during early infection by the fungus. These spots frequently turn more yellow as the disease progresses.

Which part of the crop is affected?

The disease is predominantly found on the lower leaf canopy, as the oldest leaves are typically infected first.

Disease Facts

How is the disease spread?

The spores of the fungus spread from plant to plant (leaf to leaf) by overhead irrigation or spray, wind, workers, tools and possibly insects.

What conditions favour disease?

Development of the disease is favoured when relative humidity is at 85% or higher.

Management

What are the options?

- Open canopy to increase airflow.
- Remove affected leaves.
- Consider the removal of severely affected plants and surrounding plants.
- Dispose of all infected plant material.
- Clean and sterilise tools and equipment used in the glasshouse.
- Avoid cross-contamination between infected and healthy crops.
- Use chemical fungicides.
- If possible, adjust environmental settings to: increase ventilation and maintain RH below 85%.
- Maintain a higher glasshouse temperature than outside to avoid condensation on leaves.

What about resistant varieties?

Plant leaf mould-resistant tomato varieties (denomination Pf:A-E or Ff:A-E) whenever possible. This may reduce the incidence of the disease. However, infection may still occur, since resistant varieties are only effective against selected races of the fungus.



Figures 1, 2 and 3: Tomato leaf mould symptoms on the leaf's underside. Photo: Francis Ferrada-Hartley.



Figure 4: Tomato leaf mould symptoms on the leaf's upper side. Photo: Francis Ferrada-Hartley.

In collaboration with:

