

PEST ALERT

Volume 09, No. 03

July 10, 2009

Dear Grower,

As you know, we finally have a break in the weather! Rain fall has been extremely variable across the production area. Some locations have received significant amounts of rain, for example, our Rogers Farm in Orono has received 14.35 inches of rain from May 27 to July 7. Other areas have received many rainy days, but have not accumulated anywhere near as much water.

The growth of the potato plants has been phenomenal, and the size of the “new” potatoes is impressive for this time.

Potato late blight has been found in several locations in New Brunswick. Potato late blight has been reported at a roadside stand producer in Lincoln County in southern Maine and a home garden in Ellsworth located in Hancock County. With the conducive conditions, and late blight in the region, we strongly encourage all growers to be on a 5-day spray schedule and to be carefully scouting.

As of this date, no potato late blight has been reported in traditional commercial potato production areas in the state of Maine.

If you have plant samples that you would like to have diagnosed, please bring the samples to the Pest Management office in Orono or the Presque Isle Cooperative Extension office.

Sincerely,

James D. Dwyer
 Crops Specialist

Steven B. Johnson
 Crops Specialist

James F. Dill
 Pest Mgmt. Specialist

Please call the hotline at:
 1-888-873-8623 (instate) Or 207-760-9476
 For updates

Regular Features

Aphids:

Our field scouts have started to find trace numbers of potato aphids in fields that were not treated with a systemic material at time of planting. Our scouts have found both wingless and winged aphids.

Recommended Economic Thresholds

Seed: 10% of plants with aphids, or 1 winged Green peach aphid
 Processing/Tablestock: 50% of plants with aphids,
 or 1 winged Green peach aphid

Colorado Potato Beetle:

Colorado potato beetle activity is being reported throughout our scouting range. Beetle activity is being reported in some cases where fields were treated with a systemic at time of planting. In these cases, the beetles many times appear to be only active in the upper portions of the plant. Growers that have concerns about resistance issues are encouraged to contact our office.

Recommended Economic Threshold

Adults: 25/50 plants surveyed
 Large Larvae: 75/50 plants surveyed
 Small Larvae: 200/50 plants surveyed

European Corn Borer:

We are continuing to capture European corn borer moths throughout our scouting range. Moth numbers have been extremely variable. The first egg masses laid are hatching, however, peak moth flight and egg laying should be occurring at this time. Eggs will hatch in 3-9 days, depending on weather conditions. The warmer the temperatures, the quicker that egg hatch will occur.

Please be aware that ECB activity is extremely variable. We have found some fields that are exceeding threshold for egg masses. However, most fields that we are scouting have had minor numbers of egg masses found. It takes a significant number of corn borers to create an economic impact. The cool, wet weather that we have been experiencing may extend the egg laying period.

Disease:

All areas are currently reporting a 5-day spray schedule for potato late blight protection.

Potato late blight has been reported at a roadside stand in southern Maine. Several late blight finds have been made in New Brunswick.

With the known late blight in tomato plants within the state, and late blight in nearby New Brunswick, field scouting is extremely important.

With the rainy, dark weather that we have been having creating lush growth, this bright warm weather will create some sunscald in potato plants. The sunscald will appear as a brown parchment-like area on the leaflet. When wet, this area can easily be confused with late blight. Please bring any samples to the Pest Management office in Orono or the Presque Isle Extension office for identification.

If potato late blight is found, please inform your neighbors as soon as possible so they can take appropriate actions.

