

# How to identify and control Tuta Absoluta in open field tomato farming

When the pests suck the sap off the plant then there will be poor leaves and the vegetative part of the plant will be weak. Some pests that attack tomato plants include the white flies, red spider mites, and thrips. The diseases that attack tomatoes include the late blight and the early blight. If the early blight is not controlled on time, it will accelerate the rate at which the late blight attacks. In tomato fruits, there are cases of sun scalding where the part of the fruit that is directly subjected to the sun during the day is scarred by the sun. Tomato plants can also be affected by cases of blossom end rot. This disease is brought about by either high nitrogen levels during the vegetative growth stage, inadequate calcium in the soil, or less water.

## **Pests and diseases.**

Some of the pests that attack tomato plants include the white flies, red spider mites, and thrips- all of which are characterized by sucking the sap off the plant. The diseases that attack tomatoes include the late blight and the early blight. In cases of late blight, it happens overnight and the farmer finds the whole produce in the farm is blackish in color and the leaves have a color change. In the cases of early blight, the disease starts from the main leaves of the plant and moves up to the rest of the leaves gradually. If the early blight is not controlled on time, it will accelerate the rate at which the late blight attacks. In tomato fruits, there are cases of sun scalding where the part of the fruit that is directly subjected to the sun during the day is scarred by the sun which reduces the moisture content of the fruit.

## **Chemicals.**

A farmer should implement a chemical spray program from the time they transplant because pests start attacking the crops from as early as the nursery stage. The farmer needs to also do their research before purchasing chemicals as some agronomists might ill-advise just to earn money. Scouting of the field should be done daily as the farmer will be able to control the pests early on. Most pests fall under the same category of sucking the plants sap, and it will be easier for the farmer to use one chemical to control at least 2-3 sap sucking pests.