



Horticultural
Development
Company

New Project

PC 293

Tomato: Impact of sulphur-based fungicides on parasitic wasps

Project Number: PC 293

Title: Tomato: Impact of sulphur-based fungicides on parasitic wasps

Start and end dates: 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

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Project Co-ordinator: Paul Simmonds, British Sugar plc, Cornerways Nursery

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Background and project objectives

For more than three decades, glasshouse whiteflies (*Trialeurodes vaporariorum*) have been successfully controlled on UK tomato crops with the parasitic wasp, *Encarsia formosa*. During the last three years there has been a marked increase in the number of failures of this prophylactic control strategy. These difficulties appear to have coincided with an increase in the use of sulphur-based products to control powdery mildew. It is hypothesised that the vapour action and pungent properties of the sulphur-based products interfere with the initial searching behaviour of female *Encarsia formosa* so that the parasitoids are unable to find their host.

This project will investigate the problem via the interrogation of archived pesticide use records, the collection of more topical information from tomato growers and through specifically designed practical studies.

Guidelines for best practice will be prepared using all available information. Any gaps in the existing knowledge will be identified and, if necessary, recommendations will be made for additional or complementary studies.

Further information

Email the HDC office (hdc@hdc.org.uk), quoting your HDC number, alternatively contact the HDC at the address below.

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