



Horticultural
Development
Company

New Project

PC 302

Organic tomato: Phase 1 of contingency plans for the control of *Tuta absoluta* and *Nesidiocoris tenuis*.

Project Number: PC 302

Title: Organic tomato: Phase 1 of contingency plans for the control of *Tuta absoluta* and *Nesidiocoris tenuis*.

Start and end dates: 1 August 2009 – 31 July 2010 (12 months)

Project Leader: Dr Phil Morley - White Salads Group

Project Co-ordinator: Mr Phil Pearson - A Pearson & Sons

Location: Wight Salads Ltd, Main Road, Arreton, Isle of Wight, PO30 3AR
Horticilha Agro-Industria S.A., Cilha Queimada EN 5 Km 10, 2890-129 Alcochete,
Portugal

Background and project objectives

The overall commercial objective will be to allow UK tomato growers to retain organic production status when faced with an outbreak of either *Tuta absoluta* or *Nesidiocoris tenuis*.

Tuta absoluta and *Nesidiocoris tenuis* are becoming increasingly important pests in Southern Europe. They are extremely damaging and are currently controlled in those countries by intensive applications of chemical pesticides. However, such products would not be compatible with biological control agents and would therefore threaten the continued use of IPM in UK tomato crops. Organic tomato crops in the UK will be particularly vulnerable to these pests because growers will not be allowed to retain organic status if they use synthetic pesticides, even under PHSI instruction.

In Phase 1 the team will liaise with PHD and PHSI to monitor the *Tuta absoluta* infestation at the UK site in order to learn more about the pest's development under UK conditions. In addition, the team will evaluate control techniques based on mass trapping with pheromone assisted traps and timely applications of spinosad (an insecticide derived from naturally-occurring soil fungi which is allowed in organic systems).

WSG are in a unique position because they have organic crops in Southern Europe which are infested with this pest and in which efficacy trials may be done on a large-scale.

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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