Managing Mites-Page 2

Cucurbit Downy and Powdery Mildew-Page 6

University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

AGMatters

June 2024 *Produce, Tobacco & Dairy News*

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Animal Disease Traceability Rule

Dr. Michelle Arnold, DVM-Ruminant Extension Veterinarian

In a press release issued on April 26, 2024, it was announced that a new rule, entitled "Use of Electronic Identification (EID) Eartags as Official Identification in Cattle and Bison" was finalized. This final rule is an amendment to the animal disease traceability regulations already in place as of January 2013. The new rule requires eartags to be both visually and electronically readable to be recognized as official eartags for interstate travel for cattle and bison covered under the regulations. In addition, the amendment revised the definition of dairy cattle, clarified certain record keeping requirements, and revised requirements for cattle moving to slaughter. This final rule is specifically focused on improving the ability to trace LIVE animals accurately and rapidly to contain disease outbreaks before they can do substantial damage to the cattle industry. The rule will be published in the Federal Register in the coming weeks and will take effect 180 days after its publication. APHIS maintains an Animal Disease Traceability webpage with direct access to the Final Rule, FAQs, how to obtain free electronic ID tags, and other resources at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/traceability.

This article will attempt to address some of the less frequently asked questions about important aspects of the new rule. For reference, page numbers are included where these questions are addressed in the final rule.

Has anything changed with this new rule regarding which cattle are required to have "official identification" when moving interstate?

No, the final rule does not change the categories of cattle and bison subject to the official ID requirements for interstate movement. Cattle and bison that move interstate and fall into specific categories need official, individual eartags that now can be read both visually and electronically. The requirement for individual identification does not include feeder cattle, nor any cattle or bison moving directly to slaughter.

Beef Cattle (and Bison) that currently require official ID:

-All sexually intact beef cattle and bison 18 months of age or over;

- Cattle and bison of any age used for rodeo or recreational events; and

-Cattle and bison of any age used for shows or exhibitions.

Dairy Cattle that currently require official ID:

-All female dairy cattle of any age and all dairy males born after March 11, 2013; the new rule revised the definition of dairy cattle as follows: "All cattle, regardless of age or sex or current use, that are of a breed(s) or offspring of a breed used to produce milk or other dairy products for human consumption, including, but not limited to, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and Whites."

According to the revised definition of "dairy cattle", the offspring of a dairy animal requires official ID for interstate movement. Does this include Beef on Dairy calves?

Yes! According to the final rule, "APHIS' oper *continued on pg. 8*

Upcoming Events

June 18
Twilight Tour
Fairview, KY

June 21
Tobacco GAP
Christian County Extension Office, 2PM

July 8
The Business of Blooms Short Course: For Cut Flower Growers
Hardin County Extension Office

July 8
Pennyrile Beekeepers
Christian County Extension Office

July 23
Corn, Soybean & Tobacco Field Day
UKREC, Princeton KY

Please watch your mail for a address update postcard.
We are in the process of updating our mailing lists. If you receive a card in the mail and wish to continue receiving AgMatters and event flyers, please return the postcard. Instruction will be on the card. Thank you.

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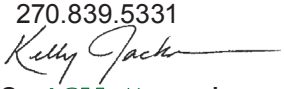


AGMatters

Managing Mites

Ric Bessin, Kentucky Pest News, 6.11.24

Mites can be challenging pests to manage in the greenhouse/high tunnel and field. Partly due to their small size, they can go undetected until their numbers build, and damage becomes apparent. While it is fortunate that there are several miticides available, these materials need to be managed appropriately because there are limitations on the number of uses, problems with the ability of mite populations to become resistant to miticides that are overused, and some miticides are effective against only certain species of mites. Because of this, regular weekly monitoring becomes the backbone for mite management.

With vegetable crops, there are three primary mite species that growers need to scout for routinely. This includes (1) two-spotted spider mite, (2) tomato russet mite, and (3) broad mite. Because broad and russet mites are difficult to find when scouting, growers should scout for their damage.

Two-spotted spider mite

The two spotted spider mite is the largest of these mites when fully mature and usually on the surface of leaves. The color of the body varies from yellow to tan to green. They are spider mites because they produce webbing, and the webbing is noticeable between plant structures when populations are large. Generally, producers should look for the spider mites and the stippling (small light-colored spots) they cause on leaves when scouting.

Tomato russet mite

Tomato russet mite, in some years, is one of the more common pest problems with high tunnel tomato production in Kentucky. Early signs of damage are either the appearance of small russeted fruit or bronzing of the stem. Problems often begin near the base of the plant and work upward. Damage by this mite is often mistaken for disease.

These are tiny mites relative to other mites but can be seen with a 20X hand lens. They will develop incredible numbers of minute mites and cause leaves to turn brown and die. The mites move from these leaves in search of new foliage. Growers often describe the damage as if the lower leaves were burned or fired up. Feeding on fruit causes it to become darkened and russeted.

The damage moves rapidly up the plant and from plant to plant as the mites can be blown between plants or by workers handling plants in the high tunnel. If russet mite is suspected, growers need to look for them on the upper and lower sides of green foliage just above the damaged leaves. Growers are often surprised how rapidly tomato russet mite problems move through the high tunnel.

Tomato russet mite feeds on plants in the solanaceous family. This mite is not in the same family as spider mites, so miticides that just control spider mites will not be effective.

Broad mite

Another mite seen occasionally on peppers (especially susceptible) and tomatoes is broad mite. It is also known as the tropical mite and has a very wide distribution and host range.

Like tomato russet mite, the broad mite is minute but also hidden near the bud of plants. It feeds in buds and is not found on expanded leaves. Broad mites inject saliva into plants that can be toxic, resulting in distortion of the new foliage and stems. Damage also results in a hardening of tissue and downward cupping of young leaves. This damage can be mistaken for virus or herbicide damage. Growers observing these symptoms should monitor for mites with a 20X hand lens. Broad mite eggs are characteristic: they are translucent and appear to be covered in jewels.

See Page 4 for management options for mites.

Corn Disease Update

Kiersten Wise, Kentucky Pest News, 6.11.24

Farmers are annually concerned about corn disease, and this year will be no exception. Corn growth stages in Kentucky vary widely, with some corn likely to tassel this week, while in other parts of Kentucky, corn is still in the bag and yet to be planted. The challenges to the 2024 planting season will make foliar disease monitoring and management decisions more important as the summer progresses.

Anthracnose & Gray Leaf Spot

Frequent rainfall across the state has led to some detections of anthracnose leaf blight (caused by Colletotrichum graminicola), and some low levels of gray leaf spot (caused by Cercospora zeae-maydis) in the lower canopy of corn that is close to tasseling. To date, no concerning levels of disease have been observed, but it is important to scout frequently, monitor University resources, and be prepared to act if conditions warrant foliar disease management. In most cases, a single foliar fungicide application at tasseling/silking (VT/R1) will be most effective at preventing yield loss due to foliar diseases, and it also provides the greatest chance of seeing a positive return on investment.

Fig. 1. Gray Leaf Spot (Photo: Kiersten Wise, UK)

Southern Rust

One of the most important corn diseases to monitor in Kentucky is southern rust. The fungus that causes southern rust does not overwinter in Kentucky, but spores of the fungus move north on wind currents and weather each summer. To date, southern rust has been confirmed in Louisiana and Georgia. Southern rust typically arrives in Kentucky in mid-July, and whether a fungicide will be needed to manage southern rust at that time will depend on the crop growth stage at the time it is detected in an area. Fungicide applications may be needed to manage southern rust through the milk (R3) growth stage.

Figure 2. Southern rust on corn. (Photo: Kiersten Wise, UK)

Tar Spot

Tar spot is a new disease in Kentucky, with only a handful of counties having confirmed disease since 2021. In all cases, tar spot was not observed until mid-September and did not impact yield. This is a disease of concern in states to the north. Tar spot has been detected in a few northern states as of June 10.

Fungicide Application Considerations

If considering a fungicide application in 2024, remember to scout fields first and check hybrid resistance ratings prior to fungicide application. Hybrids that are moderately resistant or resistant to foliar diseases (like gray leaf spot) are less likely to demonstrate an economic response to fungicide application.

Because of the variation in corn growth stages, and detections of important diseases in other states, farmers may be tempted to alter their planned fungicide application timings. Multiple foliar fungicide application timings are promoted in corn, but research at the University of Kentucky and in other states has shown that a fungicide application at tasseling/silking (VT/R1) is most effective at preventing yield loss due to foliar diseases, and it also provides the greatest chance of seeing a positive return on investment. Early foliar fungicide applications that occur at V4-V6 are less likely to provide an economic gain.

Another popular application timing in Kentucky is a pre-tassel application that occurs between V10 and V14. University of Kentucky research has indicated that this application timing can provide comparable disease control and yield response to a VT/R1 application in a year with average disease pressure.

Scouting over the next few weeks and just prior to tasseling can help determine if fungicide applications are needed. Although disease levels will continue to build over the course of the season, University research indicates that foliar fungicides applied at tasseling or early silking (VT-R1) provide optimal foliar disease control for diseases like gray leaf spot compared to applications that occur earlier or later in the season. For southern rust, a fungicide application may be needed through milk (R3). Management of tar spot will be on a case-by-case basis at this time. Always check with your county agent for updates on the diseases present in your specific county and help determining if management is warranted.

Mite Management

Each of these mite species is often kept under control in the field through predation by natural enemies. However, reliance on broad-spectrum insecticides can impact natural enemies and result in damaging populations. In these situations, miticides may be needed, but keep in mind that not all miticides control all mite species.

Each miticide has restrictions on the maximum use per crop cycle and some have restrictions against consecutive applications. Back-to-back applications with the same miticide may foster the development of resistance. Miticides are not used preventively, only when mite problems are first noticed. If a second application is needed, a miticide from a different IRAC group needs to be used. Generally, producers should wait a week after a miticide application to assess its effectiveness.

A fruit damaged by tomato russet mite and characteristic stem bronzing (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK).

Miticide	Active ingredient	IRAC Group	For use on these mites			For use on these crop groups		
			Spider mites	Broad mite	Russet mite	Fruiting veg.	Cucurbit veg.	Leafy greens
Acramite	bifenazate	25	X			X	X	
Agri-Mek	abamectin	6	X	X	X	X	X	X
Brigade	bifenthrin	3A	X			X	X	*1
Danitol	fenpropathrin	3A	X			X	X	
Kanemite	acequinocyl	20B	X	X		X	*4	
Magister	fenazaquin	21A	X	X	X	X	X	
Oberon	spiromesifen	23	X	X	X	X	X	X
Portal	fenpyroximate	21A	X	X	X	X		
Pylon	chlorfenapyr	13	X	X		*3		
Zeal	etoxazole	10B	X			*2	X	

*1 = Spinach and head lettuce only; *2 = Pepper and eggplant only; *3 = Greenhouse/high tunnel use only; *4 = Cucumber and melon only; X = can use

Bacon and Tomato Dip

1 cup fat free sour cream

1 cup low fat mayonnaise

2 large tomatoes, diced, reserve excess juice

4 slices bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1. **Combine** all ingredients.
2. **Add** reserved tomato juice until dip reaches desired consistency.
3. **Serve** with fresh vegetables or reduced fat crackers.

Yield: 16, 2 tablespoon servings.

Nutrition Analysis: *50 calories; 3 g fat; 1 g saturated fat; 5 mg cholesterol; 160 mg sodium; 6 g carbohydrate; 0 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 1 g protein.*

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

Kentucky Proud

Bacterial Wilt of Cucurbits

Kim Leonberger, Kentucky Pest News, 6.11.245

Bacterial wilt of cucurbit crops is a common issue in Kentucky. Cucumbers and muskmelon (cantaloupe) are highly susceptible to bacterial wilt, while squash and pumpkin are less susceptible. Watermelon is known to be resistant to bacterial wilt. Infected plants quickly collapse, resulting in crop loss. Preventative practices are critical for avoiding yield loss.

Bacterial Wilt Facts

- Symptoms often first appear as dull green, wilted leaves or groups of leaves. Over time, wilting becomes prominent throughout the plant; collapsed foliage and vines turn brown, shrivel, and die (Figure 1).
- Field diagnosis can be conducted using a simple "bacterial ooze test." For cucumber and muskmelon, select a wilted vine (not dead), and using a sharp knife, make a cut near the crown. Touch the cut ends together for 3 to 5 seconds and then slowly pull them apart, looking for fine thread-like strands of bacterial ooze connecting the two parts (Figure 2). To diagnose bacterial wilt in all cucurbits, including squash and pumpkin, place cut pieces of affected vines into a clear glass container filled with water. When the bacterium is present, a cloudy string or mass of bacterial ooze will flow into the water from cut stem pieces.
- Striped and spotted cucumber beetles transmit the bacterial pathogen during feeding. The pathogen overwinters in the gut of these vectors.
- Spring temperatures above 55°F promote growth of cucurbit seedlings, as well as striped and spotted cucumber beetle feeding on all plant parts.

Figure 1: Infected plants eventually collapse with vines becoming brown and shriveled. (Photo: Edward Sikora, Auburn University, Bugwood.org)

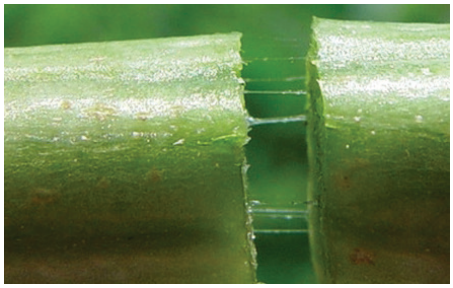


Figure 2: In cucumber and muskmelon, diagnosis in the field can be conducted by cutting a wilted vine, touching the two end together, pulling them apart, and looking for the presence of thread-link strands connecting the pieces. (Photo: Gerald Holmes, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, Bugwood.org)

Management

Once plants become infected with bacterial wilt, no disease management practices are effective. Preventative strategies should be used to limit introductions and spread of disease.

- Select resistant or tolerant cultivars
- Rotate crops away from cucurbits for a minimum of 2 years.
- Manage weeds.
- An insecticide management program should be implemented as soon as seedlings emerge or after transplanting. An effective program should include one or more of the following: Contact or systemic insecticides; Trap cropping; Physical barriers (netting) and mulches.
- Remove and destroy infected plants.

Publication Spotlight

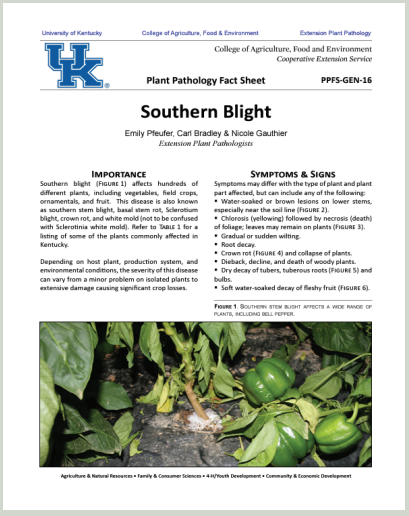
Southern Blight (PPFS-GEN-16)

Southern blight affects hundreds of different plants, including vegetables, field crops, ornamentals, and fruit. This disease is also known as southern stem blight, basal stem rot, Sclerotium blight, crown rot, and white mold.

Depending on host plant, production system, and environmental conditions, the severity of this disease can vary from a minor problem on isolated plants to extensive damage causing significant crop losses.

This publication gives symptoms, signs, and control options.

Contact the Christian County Extension office to request a free copy - (270) 886-6328



University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food & Environment Extension Plant Pathology

College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

Plant Pathology Fact Sheet PPFS-GEN-16

Southern Blight

Emily Pfeufer, Carl Bradley & Nicole Gauthier
Extension Plant Pathologists

IMPORTANCE

Southern blight (FIGURE 1) affects hundreds of different plants, including vegetables, field crops, ornamentals, and fruit. This disease is also known as southern stem blight, basal stem rot, Sclerotium blight, crown rot, and white mold (not to be confused with Sclerotinia white mold). Refer to TABLE 1 for a listing of some of the plants commonly affected in Kentucky.

Depending on host plant, production system, and environmental conditions, the severity of this disease can vary from a minor problem on isolated plants to extensive damage causing significant crop losses.

SYMPTOMS & SIGNS

Symptoms may differ with the type of plant and plant part affected, but can include any of the following:

- Water-soaked or brown lesions on lower stems, especially near the soil line (FIGURE 2).
- Chlorosis (yellowing) followed by necrosis (death) of foliage; leaves may remain on plants (FIGURE 3).
- Gradual or sudden wilting.
- Root decay.
- Crown rot (FIGURE 4) and collapse of plants.
- Dieback, decline, and death of woody plants.
- Dry decay of tubers, tuberous roots (FIGURE 5) and bulbs.
- Soft water-soaked decay of fleshy fruit (FIGURE 6).

FIGURE 1. SOUTHERN STEM BLIGHT AFFECTS A WIDE RANGE OF PLANTS, INCLUDING BELL PEPPER.

Agriculture & Natural Resources • Family & Consumer Sciences • 4-H/Youth Development • Community & Economic Development

Cucurbit Downy and Powdery Mildew Management

Meg McGrath, UMass Extension

Cucurbit powdery mildew (PM) is a fungal disease of cucurbit crops that begins developing in mid-summer every year. The fungus produces round patches of powdery white sporulation on the tops and bottoms of cucurbit leaves and severe infections will lead to extensive defoliation, reducing yield.

The similarly named cucurbit downy mildew (DM) is a different pathogen; powdery mildew is a true fungus, whereas downy mildew is a fungal-like organism called an oomycete. Downy mildew spores land on host leaves, infect and grow within the leaf, and produce fuzzy gray sporulation only on the undersides of leaves. Lesions are angular because the pathogen cannot grow across the leaf veins. Both pathogens can be transmitted over long distances by wind. Neither downy nor powdery mildew infects cucurbit fruit directly; however, leaves infected by either pathogen will die prematurely, resulting in significant yield losses and decreased fruit quality. While several of the management recommendations are the same for preventing disease spread by these organisms, the distinction is important because not all the fungicides that control powdery mildew will control downy mildew.

Also, downy mildew is caused by an obligate parasite, meaning that it must have a living host to survive. For that reason, it does not overwinter in Kentucky, where winter temperatures kill cucurbit crops. Instead, it travels north from warmer regions on storms as the season progresses. The powdery mildew pathogen, on the other hand, can produce a spore in the fall that enables it to survive over winter.

Powdery & Downy Mildew Management

The most important components of an effective management program for powdery and downy mildews are resistant varieties and properly timed fungicides. Both diseases develop best on the undersides of leaves, so mobile (or translaminar) fungicides are needed to achieve successful control. Resistance to certain fungicides is widespread for both pathogens; fungicide recommendations change as new resistance develops or as new products are released. Always implement a resistance management program; do not wait until there is a problem. The goal is to delay development of resistance, not manage resistant strains afterwards. Again, because downy mildew is an oomycete and not a true fungus, targeted fungicides that control powdery mildew will not control downy mildew, and vice versa. Phytophthora blight, also caused by an oomycete, will usually also be controlled by fungicides that are effective for downy mildew.

Cucurbit powdery mildew sporulation on a squash leaf.

- **Select resistant varieties.** There are many PM-resistant varieties of cucurbits available, and DM-resistant cucumber varieties available.
- Inspect crops routinely for symptoms of both powdery and downy mildew, beginning at the start of crop development. Scouting routinely for early symptoms is important to ensure targeted fungicides are applied starting at the onset of disease development.
- Monitoring disease outbreaks is important for determining when fungicide applications are warranted. Cucurbit plants are susceptible to downy mildew from emergence; however, this disease usually does not start to develop until later in crop development when the pathogen is dispersed by wind into the region. The pathogen is thought to only be able to survive over winter in southern Florida, and from there spreads northward. There has been no evidence that the pathogen is surviving between growing seasons where winter temperatures kill cucurbit crops (outdoors above the 30th latitude). Tracking occurrences and paying attention to forecasted storms can alert you to when protectant and/or targeted sprays are warranted.
- Make preventive and targeted pesticide applications based on forecast and reported risk. For both powdery and downy mildews, apply protectant fungicides weekly before symptoms develop in your crop. For powdery mildew, begin these preventive sprays when crops start producing fruit or when powdery

mildew is reported in the area. For downy mildew, begin when the disease has been reported in the area and weather forecasts indicate that storms may be moving in your direction. When you first detect PM in your crop by scouting, add a PM-targeted material. When the DM risk level increases in your area, add a DM-targeted material. Targeted materials will be different for PM (a true fungus) and DM (an oomycete). Rotate between FRAC groups for the targeted materials.

- Add new fungicides to the program when they become available; substitute new for older products if they are in the same FRAC group, unless efficacy data indicate they are not as effective.

Protectant Materials Include:

- **Sulfur**: very effective, inexpensive product for PM. Has no efficacy for DM or other diseases.
- **Oils:** Effective for PM but not DM
- **Chlorothalonil and copper:** Effective against both PM and DM. Copper is less effective against DM than chlorothalonil or mancozeb but is effective against bacterial diseases and OMRI-approved formulations are available.
- **Mancozeb:** Recommended when only DM is occurring.

Powdery Mildew Fungicides Recommendations:

When powdery mildew is present, apply targeted fungicides weekly with contact fungicides (sulfur, chlorothalonil, and oil are more effective than copper) and alternate amongst available chemistry based on FRAC Group code. It is prudent to decide now what products to use each week and have a plan in place ready to implement. Use the highest label rates to control moderately resistant isolates if present.

- **Vivando** (FRAC 50) can be applied up to 3 times with no more than 2 sequential applications. It is a good choice for the last application considering the long residual activity.
- **DMI fungicides** (FRAC 3) are also a good choice in the program, particularly for the first application. Proline is the most effective. It is also labeled for Fusarium. Crop limit is 2 applications. Procure is also very effective. It can be applied 3 times, or 4 times to direct-seeded crops when the intermediate rate is used. Trionic is a newer product, which may be more effective, but efficacy data is lacking.
- **Gatten** (FRAC U13) was introduced in 2018, and so is a relatively new chemistry. REI is 12 hr. PHI is 0 days. It can be applied 5 times. Activity is limited to powdery mildew. It was as effective as Vivando for managing powdery mildew on lower leaf surface.
- **Luna fungicides* contain fluopyram** (FRAC 7) pre-mixed with other active ingredients to yield a somewhat confusing proliferation of magical sounding products each labeled for a different set of diseases and crops – Luna Sensation (+ FRAC 3), Luna Experience (+ FRAC 11), Luna Flex (+ FRAC 3). Luna Flex has the widest range of cucurbit crops and includes a DMI (recommended) pre-mix as opposed to a QOI (not recommended due to resistance) and is therefore the recommended choice for cucurbit PM (Luna Sensation is only labeled for watermelon). Luna Flex has a 12-hour REI and a 0-day PHI and can be used twice per crop per season. Velum Prime is another fluopyram product that can be used through drip chemigation.
- **Miravis Prime*** (FRAC 7+12) has a 12-hour REI and a 0-day PHI and can be used twice per crop per season.
- **Orondis Opti*** (FRAC 49 + M05) is a pre-mix of a new chemical, oxathiapiprolin, with the protectant fungicide chlorothalonil. Use Orondis Opti (or any other FRAC 49-containing product) in no more than 33% of the applications, or a maximum of 4 applications per planting, whichever is fewer. Orondis Opti has a 12-hour REI and a 0-day PHI.

Quintec, Torino, Endura, and QoI fungicides (FRAC 3) are not recommended due to resistance.

**Newer products that are less likely to have resistance since they have not been recommended for as long.*

Downy Mildew Fungicide Recommendations:

Targeted fungicides below are currently recommended:

- **Elumin*, Zing! or Gavel** (FRAC 22): 12-hour REI and 2-day PHI
- **Orondis Opti** (FRAC 49 + M05): 12-hour REI and 0-day PHI
- **Zampro** (FRAC 40 + 45): 12-hour REI and 0-day PHI
- **Omega** (FRAC 29): 12-hour REI and 30-day PHI for melons and 7-day REI for cucumbers and squash.
- **Previcur Flex** (FRAC 28): 12-hour REI and 2-day PHI. Can be applied foliar or via drip chemigation.
- **Curzate, or Tanos** (FRAC 27): 12-hour REI and 3-day PHI
- **Ranman** (FRAC 21): 12-hour REI and 0-day PHI in the field and 1-day PHI in the greenhouse.

**Newer products that are less likely to have resistance since they have not been recommended for as long*

Bold indicates cucurbit DM "A-team" products per Mary Hausbeck, pathologist at Michigan State University

Presidio (43), Revus and Forum (40) are not recommended.

Symptoms of cucurbit downy mildew on the top side of a cucumber leaf. Photo: M. Ng

continued from pg.1

ational guidance has consistently held that beef/dairy cross bred cattle fall under the definition of dairy cattle and are therefore already required to have official identification; our change to the dairy cattle definition codifies this longstanding guidance regarding how to interpret the regulations". "Beef/dairy cross breeds should already be officially identified. We have no indication of noncompliance or controversy surrounding this policy…We acknowledge the possibility that there may be cattle producers that did not consider their beef/dairy cross breeds to be dairy cattle and were alerted to our interpretation of the definition of dairy cattle to encompass beef/dairy cross breeds by this rulemaking". In addition, the revision states that the official ID numbers of all dairy cattle, regardless of whether they are sexually intact, must be recorded on the Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (ICVI or "Health Certificate").

Why would Beef on Dairy calves be at higher risk for disease?

"As stated in the proposed rule, dairy farm management practices, such as pooling colostrum from multiple cows for many calves, commingling calves at different locations during their lifetimes, and movement to many destinations, result in a higher risk of disease transmission. Beef/dairy crosses born on dairy farms are likely to be exposed to these practices, especially in early life; therefore, they are at an increased risk of disease transmission."

The final rule added several recordkeeping requirements for official identification. Currently anyone (State, Tribe, accredited veterinarian, or person) who distributes official ID devices must maintain records of recipient names and addresses for 5 years. How did this change?

The final rule added that the official ID distribution records must be entered by the person distributing the devices into a database designated by APHIS. Any eartags applied by a federally accredited veterinarian must also be recorded in a readily accessible database available to APHIS in the event of a traceback. However, a producer who applies official ID tags to his or her own animals but does not distribute the tags to anyone else does not fall under the recordkeeping reporting requirement.

APHIS did add a new paragraph stating that required records must be maintained by the responsible person or entity and "be of sufficient accuracy, quality, and completeness to demonstrate compliance with all conditions and requirements" of the final rule. It further requires that APHIS be allowed access to all records during normal business hours, to include visual inspection and reproduction (e.g., photocopying, digital reproduction), and the responsible person or entity must submit to APHIS all reports and notices containing the information specified within 48 hours of receipt of request for records.

Is a PIN still required to acquire and apply EID tags?

Yes. The PIN (premise ID number) is a nationally unique number assigned to a premise, usually issued through the State animal health official, that is a "geographically distinct location". The PIN is associated with the location the tag was placed on the animal, not the location of the cattle owner. "All currently approved EID eartags (RFID AIN "840"eartags) are associated with a PIN or a State location identification number (LID), inasmuch as a PIN or a LID is required for" acquisition of the tags. "A PIN is the numerical equivalent of a 911 postal address or a GPS number. A LID is the State-managed equivalent for producers who prefer to have the State store their information, rather than the Federal Government".

This final rule does not require producers to purchase and affix EID eartags to their cattle as the only acceptable official identification device or method to meet the official identification requirements for interstate movement; the regulations continue to list eartags as one of several forms of authorized official identification, which also include tattoos and brands when accepted by State officials in the sending and receiving States.

Given that a major reason for this new official ID rule is to keep transcription errors to a minimum, why does APHIS still require a visually-readable tag?

The 15-digit identification number currently used for all approved EID eartags begins with the same 6 digits: 840003. The first 3 digits are the country code, which is 840 for the United States. The following 3 digits, 003, signify a sequential numbering system from a start number of 003,000,000,000. Therefore, an individual visually reading an EID tag would only read 9 unique characters (the characters following 840003). These characters are only numbers, with readability standards including larger font size and color contrast. A transcription error "is not likely to significantly increase from the current state when relying on visual read of the eartag; if anything, several factors should make it easier, not harder, to transcribe the tag number. However, the use of EID tags would allow for an electronic read of the tag if a transcription error were believed to have occurred." This final rule does not require producers or livestock markets to have electronic reading equipment or additional data management systems, because the official EID tags must be readable visually as well as electronically.

(Part 2 of Animal Disease Traceability Rule will appear in the July issue.)