

Problem: Leaf Roll on Tomatoes



Plants Affected: Tomato

Description: When tomato plants grow vigorously in mild, spring weather the top growth often exceeds the root development. When the first few days of warm, dry summer weather hit, the plant 'realizes' that it has a problem and needs to increase its root development. The plant attempts to reduce its leaf area by rolling leaves. The leaves curl along the length of the leaf (leaflet) in an upward fashion. It is often accompanied by a thickening of the leaf giving it a leathery texture. Interestingly, leaf roll is worse on some varieties than others. Though rolling usually occurs during the spring to summer shift period, it may also occur after a heavy cultivating or hoeing, a hard rain, or any sudden change in weather. Too much rain can saturate the soil and suffocate the roots. A root system lacking in oxygen cannot move water to the upper parts of the plant resulting in the same symptoms that occur with too little soil moisture or a limited root system.

Recommendations: Avoid deep hoeing close to plants, mulch to keep the soil cooler and to moderate moisture extremes and do a good job of watering by keeping the soil moist but not waterlogged. This leaf roll is a temporary condition that normally will go away after a week or so when the plant has a chance to acclimate, recover from injury, or the soil has a chance to dry out.

References:

1. [Tomato Leaf and Fruit Diseases and Disorders](#), K-State Research & Extension, Plant Pathology Pub L-721
2. [Tomato Leaves Rolling?](#) Clemson Cooperative Extension, Home & Garden Information Center, HGIC 2222

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