

## **Problem:** Spider Mites on Tomato



**Hosts:** Wide variety of vegetables including tomato

**Description:** Hot, dry weather often means spider mites on tomatoes. Look for stippling on the upper surface of the leaves as well as some fine webbing on the underside of the leaves. These tiny arthropods (they are not true insects) are often difficult to see due to their size and their habit of feeding on the underside of leaves. If mites are suspected, hold a sheet of white paper beneath a leaf and tap the leaf.

Mites will be dislodged and can be seen as tiny specks on the paper that move about.

**Recommendations:** Spider mite control can be challenging. A strong jet of water can be used to remove the mites but may not be as easy as it sounds. A high-pressure directed spray is needed to dislodge the mites. Since spider mites feed on the underside of the leaves, the spray is most effective if it comes from below. Spray at least twice per week when spider mites are active.

Horticultural oils and insecticidal soaps (Safer's, for example) can also be helpful. Spray early in the morning when temperatures are cooler and plants have rehydrated. Resprays will likely be needed.

### **References:**

1. [Water Wands: High Pressure Water Spray Devices for Insect and Mite Control](#), Texas A&M, Entomology Extension
2. [Spidermites](#), University of Nebraska, UNL Extension: Hort Update

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