

How diseases develop and how to identify plant diseases on tomato farm

Tomatoes are one of the vegetables that are highly consumed world wide but its production is affected by many diseases.

No matter how great your fertilizer programme is, soil quality, water management and variety, if you fail to manage diseases on your farm, your potential yield will be compromised. Diseases only occur if there is conducive environment for the disease to develop eg damp leaves, susceptible host eg variety without resistance and virulent pathogen ie virulent bacteria, fungi, virus or nematodes.

Diagnosis and recommendation

Always ensure that you diagnose the condition before recommending treatment. Knowing how to diagnose is important so as to make informed decisions. During diagnosing, look at the leaves and stems to identify any form of abnormalities. The abnormalities can be inform of spots, decolouration, mildews, rots on leaves, stems and leaves, or deformed leaves.

When any of the signs is identified, it indicates that something is wrong and before it spreads, you need to apply an intervention. Diseases are best controlled by preventive rather than curative measures.

The most common diseases of tomato are wilt, blight, spots on leaves or stems, dumping off and tomato yellow leaf curl virus diseases.

When symptoms are identified, the intervention strategies are; irrigate only in the morning, remove infected plant leaves, eliminate or reduce weeds, staking, pulling off old leaves and

spraying using fungicides.