

Report from the Field

As so often happens when humans attempt to solve one problem, they cause another; this is what has unfortunately happened to us this year with our tomatoes. As you may remember, last summer we had tomato hornworms galore and spent countless hours picking them off our tomato plants. So when we learned that the adult stage of the tomato hornworm only flies only at night, and we could protect our greenhouse tomato plants from the hornworm simply by closing the greenhouse every evening, we were quite excited.

So we diligently closed the greenhouse this summer, thrilled by the prospect of avoiding these massive plant eaters. Thus far we have been successful, but we created, or exacerbated (the cooler temperatures this summer haven't helped), a new problem by restricting air flow for so many hours each day. A severe yellowing of the leaves started on some plants about four weeks ago. At this point, worried parents that we are, we feared the worst, the plants would die in short order and we would harvest almost no tomatoes, destroying all possibilities of being in the black for the year (a little extreme reaction).

We subsequently learned the ailment was *tomato leaf mold*, not a good thing for your plants to have, but luckily it is not a disease to cause sudden death. Four weeks on, the disease has spread and taken its toll on certain varieties of our tomatoes, but we can't complain since the harvest has been very good for the last month.

Some of the varieties are very susceptible, like those in the 2nd photo, and others have been holding on much better. In past years we have harvested tomatoes well into October, while this year we expect the harvest to end much earlier (due to the low temperatures and the leaf mold). So expect to see few heirlooms starting this week, and the harvest of the much loved sungolds will likely start to drop off this week as well.

A great deal of our angst has been around the tomatoes, but the success of other crops has been a welcome relief: beans and eggplant have obviously been bountiful; the onions and garlic did well and are almost done drying and are ready to be prepped; beets and carrots are abundant; chard and herbs are plentiful; the cucumbers and squash are bounteous. We also still have high hopes for potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, while we are just starting to harvest sweet red peppers.

New Additions to the Farm

Aiyana and Sena have, for the second time this year, hatched out chicks. They have a hen that loves to brood (sit on eggs), so they were excited to oblige their Aunt when she asked if they wanted to hatch chicks for her. They left eggs in the nesting box and put some more eggs under her three weeks ago, and like clockwork, the chicks have started to hatch. If you want to see them, just ask the young mothers, Sena and Aiyana!



Tomato hornworms 2013



Tomato Leaf Mold (late July)



Tomato Leaf Mold (mid Aug)