



August 8th, 2019

Dear California Processing Tomato Grower,

You are receiving this bulletin because you are in a position and have the power to change the trajectory of our broomrape problem in California. If you are in need of, or find yourself wanting, a primer on the topic I've attached a letter (Addendum 1) which was sent to all processors prior to the 2019 fresh pack season.

The unfortunate reality is that there is a continued presence of Branched broomrape in processing tomato fields in 2019. No actor in the processing tomato supply chain in California will be exempt from loss if this weed becomes widespread.

We are still in the window where eradication is possible, but your help is needed to achieve this:

- **We have the resources and the plan to do the needed research but we need more field sites. If you, or someone you knows, has an impacted field please encourage them to get in contact with the CTRI (530-405-9469) prior to field burn-down.** There are significant research dollars available and an engaged research team to determine the most efficient and cost effective practices around detection, eradication and long term management. These resources cannot be fully utilized if we don't have sufficient field sites.

- **Broomrape is easily spread by equipment, boots and water and our standard cleaning procedures do not work for this weed seed. The following cleaning procedures should be followed with ALL equipment in areas of high concern:**
 1. A designated area for cleaning should be assigned and solely utilized;
 2. **Soil and plant debris should be knocked off of all machinery** using scrapers, air compressors and pressure washers **(in that order);**
 3. **Quaternary ammonium, NOT BLEACH,** is the cleaning agent which is proven to inhibit seed germination. Locally this can be bought under the labels: **Clorox Pro Quaternary or MG 4-Quat. A solution of 1% is necessary for efficacy** and should be used to spray down the equipment after soil and plant debris has been knocked off and pressure washing is completed. These quaternary ammonium products can be purchased at your local farm supply or Wilbur Ellis outlets.

The above procedure is time consuming and expensive, but in areas of high concern it is necessary to reduce the risk of spread to your own fields and the fields of others by your equipment.

As stated in the pre-season bulletins to processors and PCAs, and in our 2019 newsletter - should broomrape be discovered in a field, the grower should be contacted immediately, who should in turn contact their respective county Agricultural Commissioner. In addition to this, the above specific actions should be taken to drive the needed research work forward and to reduce the risk of future spread.

If you have questions or concerns around this please reach out to Zach Bagley at 530-405-9469 or zach@tomatonet.org.

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As an industry we are working on both short and long term solutions in the following areas: ongoing talks with the USDA to get instances related to broomrape included under Federal Crop Insurance, using the existing platform of the California Tomato Research Institute (CTRI) to direct and fund research around both spread reduction and long term management (3 grants funded for ongoing work in 2019), and finally; determining the most effective route towards eradication of broomrape seed in known infested fields. **Although these industry efforts are important, the most effective means to control the spread of this pest is active concern for the presence of this weed in processing tomato fields.**

Please share this information with those in your organization who are spending time in the field.

More information on this pest can be found at the UC IPM website. In addition, retired Farm Advisor, Gene Miyao, wrote a helpful article on the Sacramento Valley Field Crops blog in June of 2018 which can be found under the title, "Broomrape in field crops".

Sincerely,



Zach Bagley
Managing Director



Photos of Branched Broomrape in a California processing tomato field. Taken in 2018. This weed can be found in isolated areas of a field, in dense patches or significantly dispersed throughout.

