

Pepper blight in our area

My peppers are actually starting to rebound after a slow start early season. I think it was too wet for their liking. I was careful not to set them out too early during this year's cool spring (peppers do not like cool temperatures and will be stunted, just like tomatoes, if they are exposed to such). Last year it was hit and miss; this year looks like it might be the same. I probably have pepper blight living in the garden!

About 45 years ago a fungus was discovered in pep-



JENEEN WICHE

per crops in New York and since it has spread as far as California and Florida. It has been in our midst for a while, now, with proof in my pepper patch over the last few years. The fungus in question causes phytophthora blight in peppers. Some refer to the sudden wilting of peppers as damping off, phytophthora root rot, crown rot or stem and fruit rot. Clearly the fungus impacts the entire plant. I first had a problem with this blight in my pepper patch about 10 years ago, rainy summers

seem to make it worse. Phytophthora blight attacks all parts of the plant and usually becomes apparent as the plant begins to fruit, mid-season, and when the weather becomes hot and plant stress increases. You may see spots on the foliage or lesions on the stem. Fruit may develop water-soaked spots and turn moldy. The seeds inside become infected, as well, so do not save seed from infected plants...this is how it initially spread across the country.

If you have had pepper blight in the past it is likely that the fungus continues to exist in your garden soil.

The fungal spores can spread far and wide by wind and water so it may be difficult to control in the average backyard garden by simple crop rotation. Plus, the fungus has various hosts including eggplant, tomatoes, and cucurbits (cucumbers, squash, melons...).

So, what can we do? Well, some cultural practices can help but it is a tough disease to combat. Plant pathologists recommend that we practice crop rotation (but not with other host plants); be sure that your soil is well-drained; plant in raised beds or on a ridge to maximize drainage; mulch to avoid

splashing soil; use soaker hoses when irrigating; and only purchase certified seed.

I do have this year's peppers planted where only root crops have been planted for the last 4 years so maybe that is the trick to a clean crop this year. They are mulched well and producing peppers thus far but the symbiotic relationship between the forces of nature may mean that the fungus eventually spreads and becomes a problem here, too.

Considering all the things that can go wrong in the garden I think that we cannot underestimate the power of good cultural practices for

all our crops that share a garden space. Do it right from the beginning, amending the soil to improve drainage and fertility; if this seems impossible then build a series of raised beds. Keep the garden clean, removing diseased debris quickly and managing the weed-to-plant ratio. Try to keep soil moisture moderated, do not over-fertilize and get mulch down as early in the season as you can manage. And, if all else fails forego planting peppers for a couple of years and keep an eye on your tomatoes...if they stay healthy then maybe the peppers can come back to the garden.

A Prelude: 249 years of independence

BY JAMES ALLEN TIPTON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

The story of American independence has been thoroughly ingrained in the minds of every man, woman, and child of this nation. From the fireworks which soar across the warm summer night every July Fourth to high school civics exams, the anniversary of our nation's independence is hard to forget.

What is easier to forget amidst the barbecues and time off from work however, is that July 4th was merely a prelude.

Our independence may have been declared on July 4, 1776, but that date only marks when our grievances and protests against the British Empire turned from political rebellion aimed at eventual reconciliation to

a revolution for separation. In doing so, our founding fathers made the decision to fight against the greatest military power the world had ever known.

Their success was never certain, a fact they themselves were all too aware of. They were committing high treason against their mother country, and affixing their names to a document proudly declaring it. Benjamin Franklin captured these feelings following their signing of the Declaration of Independence: "We must, indeed, all hang together or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

What followed was eight long, grueling years of war and bloodshed across all settled parts of the American continent. From Boston Harbor to Boonesbor-

ough, from the swamps of South Carolina to the valleys of Vermont, colonists took up arms in defense of their homes and laid down their lives in pursuit of freedom for those who would come after them.

For many years, the cause was seemingly hopeless as American forces suffered defeat after defeat after defeat. The Battle of Quebec saw heavy casualties and drained immense resources from the continental army. The Battle of Long Island, the largest battle of the war, saw British forces crush General George Washington and take control of New York City. The Battles of Fort Washington as well as the Battle of Fort Lee see even heavier American losses, the capture of over 3,000 troops, and the beginning

of a general evacuation of the continental army from the New England coasts. The Battle of Brandywine saw General Washington again suffer a monumental defeat, leading directly to the British capturing the American capital of Philadelphia.

When Washington and his men made winter camp at Valley Forge in 1777, they were at their lowest yet. Supplies dwindled as the snow fell, disease ran rampant as men grew hungry, and Washington was preparing to be stripped of his command.

However, the persistence of the patriot cause did not waiver. Washington took this opportunity to train his men in European battle tactics, and diplomats continued to negotiate with other nations for support. In

time, each would prove successful.

When Washington's army emerged from Valley Forge, they success-

fully held off the British at the Battle of Monmouth. Coupled with the

SEE **PRELUDE/PAGE A6**

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Notes
- 6. Long-haired dog breed
- 12. ESPN's nickname
- 16. Spanish be
- 17. Disadvantage
- 18. Of I
- 19. Actor Pacino
- 20. On your way: ___ route
- 21. Fifth note of a major scale
- 22. Companies need it
- 23. News agency
- 24. Faces of an organization
- 26. Ponds
- 28. Samoa's capital
- 30. Partner to "Pa"
- 31. Adult male
- 32. Cool!
- 34. Used of a number or amount not specified
- 35. No No No
- 37. Hosts film festival
- 39. British place to house convicts

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Follower of Islam
- 2. Trauma center
- 3. French young women
- 4. Norse god
- 5. U.S. commercial flyer (abbr.)
- 6. Merchant
- 7. Peyton's younger brother
- 8. Jungle planet in "Star Wars" galaxy
- 9. Tree-dwelling animal of C. and S. America
- 10. "Pollack" actor Harris
- 11. Stuck around
- 12. Put on
- 13. Influential Norwegian playwright
- 14. Christian ___ designer
- 15. Fulfills a debt
- 25. Style
- 26. More (Spanish)
- 27. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 29. Remedy
- 31. Disturbance
- 33. "The Martian" actor Matt
- 36. Express delight
- 38. Brooklyn hoopster
- 39. 1900 lamp
- 41. Motionless
- 42. One's mother (Brit.)
- 43. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 46. Compels to act
- 47. Gardening tool
- 49. Ancient country
- 51. Frightening
- 53. Wimbledon champion Arthur
- 54. Popular plant
- 55. Database management system
- 58. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- 60. Where soldiers eat
- 64. Tenth month (abbr.)
- 65. Illuminated
- 68. Atomic #18
- 69. Adults need one to travel

KIDS' CORNER

Holiday FACT:

What are the names of the two holidays that celebrate Canadian and American sovereignty?

Answer: Canada Day and Independence Day

NEW WORD

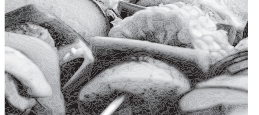
CITIZEN

a legally recognized subject of a state or commonwealth

How they say that in...

English: Parade
Spanish: Desfile
Italian: Corteo
French: Parade
German: Parade

Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Did You Know?

Fireworks are mainly made of black powder and metal salts that create different colors when burned. Flash powder also is used to give bright flashes and loud booms.

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Level: Intermediate

SOLUTIONS

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