Pest Alert for the week ending 6-19-2015

The weather has finally turned and the sun has come out. In most growing areas this week temperatures have been in the 80’s or higher. With the dry warm weather across the snake river valley the risk of a late blight outbreak is low. However, micro-climates may exist in fields where conditions are conducive for late blight. Areas such as low spots where soil moisture is highest and parts of the field shaded by windbreaks are examples of areas where scouting should be intensified. For information on what fungicides to use for managing late blight see the article recently published by Dr. Jeff Miller of Miller Research and Dr. Phill Wharton from UI (http://bit.ly/1Q4tmty).

In the Treasure Valley area and western Idaho most potato crops are now past row closure and the first reports of early blight are starting to come in. For information on early blight control see (http://bit.ly/1CinqBN). Whatever product you use to control early blight it is always recommended that you tank mix it with a protectant fungicide such as Chlorothalonil or Dithane, unless the product already contains it (e.g. Gavel or Zing!). This reduces the chances of fungicide resistance development.

In the Magic Valley area most crops are just at row closure and it is around this time that growers should be making their first application for early blight/ white mold control. Dr. Jeff Miller reports that in fields that didn't receive an insecticide treatment at planting, Colorado beetles are beginning to appear.

In east and north eastern part of the state (Pocatello up through Tetonia) crops are between the 6-8” stage and touching in the rows. There have not been any reports of disease problems this week. If you are growing a variety which is susceptible to black dot, or have had problems with black dot in the past, the 6-8” plant stage is the optimal timing to apply a black dot control product such as a strobilurin (Quadris Top, Gem, Reason, Headline etc).

For up to date information on potato diseases in Idaho and across the country follow us on twitter. http://www.twitter.com/potatodiseases