

TRADER NOTICE No. 2 of 2020

24 February 2020

To: All operators importing, packing and producing tomatoes

## Subject: Virus Alert - Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus (ToBRFV)

The Ministry of Agriculture in France have confirmed that the Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus (ToBRFV) was identified in two tomato greenhouses on a farm in Finistère. The plants originated in the United Kingdom but were produced from seeds from the Netherlands. Three other farms have been identified as having received the same type of plants and are therefore placed under surveillance.

Symptoms to look out for include, chlorosis of leaves, mosaic and mottling with leaf narrowing. Necrotic spots may appear on peduncles, calyces and petioles. Fruit show yellow or brown spots, with rugose symptoms rendering the fruits non-marketable. Fruits may be deformed and have irregular maturation.



The rough brown tomato fruit virus (ToBRFV or TBRFV) is not transmissible to humans. On the other hand, its economic impact is major: it can infect up to 100% of plants on a tomato, pepper, and chili production site, which makes it formidable for crops with high planting density such as greenhouse crops. It is extremely resistant, and can be transmitted by seeds and plants, by tomatoes which can themselves carry the virus, or by human activity (handling, use of contaminated material).

This virus was first observed in Israel in 2014, and was then found in 2018 on tomato crops in Mexico, the United States, Germany and Italy and finally in 2019 in the Netherlands, in the United Kingdom and Greece.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is calling on all importers, packers, producers and amateur gardeners to be extremely vigilant:

- When purchasing tomato or chilli or pepper seeds or plants, make sure that they are accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate or plant passport guaranteeing their virus-free status;
- Biosecurity measures must be strictly applied on any farm to prevent any introduction and spread of the virus on the territory: systematic cleaning-disinfection of the hands after handling the plants, seeds, or fruits of tomatoes, peppers or peppers on the farm; the material and clothing and work equipment must be specifically dedicated to the handling of sensitive plants;
- Early detection of any introduction of the virus into the territory is crucial to stem its spread: in the event of symptoms suggestive, any importer, producer or professional or amateur gardener is required to report immediately to the DAFM.

For more information on the disease please follow [this link](#). In the event that you have any queries in relation to this matter or wish to report suspected findings, please contact DAFM by emailing [plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie) or alternatively by telephone (01) 5058885. Yours sincerely



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