

Ozone-friendly tomatoes harvested

Methyl bromide-free tomatoes have been cultivated as part of a demonstration project, which was sponsored by the Lebanese Ministry of Environment and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This greenhouse tomato crop was grown using different combinations of non-chemical and chemical alternatives to methyl bromide. The project's success proves that high yields of tomato could be obtained at a low cost compared with those grown using methyl bromide.

Results have shown that tomato plots treated with a combination of soil solarization and Condor (1,3 dichloropropene) resulted in yields 20 per cent higher than plants treated with methyl bromide. Moreover, this combination can produce crops at approximately 70 per cent of the cost of methyl bromide treatment. Plots treated with soil solarization alone resulted in a tomato yield averaging 91 per cent of the yield of plots treated with methyl bromide. Soil solarization in combination with Vydate (oxamyl) produced tomato yields similar to those produced by methyl bromide, but at a lower cost.

Seventeen greenhouses at six project sites throughout Lebanon are testing methyl bromide substitutes for growing strawberries, cucumbers and eggplants also. Financial assistance is being provided by the Multilateral Fund. *Contact: Mr. Garo Haroutunian/Mr. Mazen Hussein, Republic of Lebanon, Ministry of Environment, P.O. Box 70-1091, Antelias, Beirut, Lebanon. Tel: +961 (4) 522 222; Fax: +961 (4) 418 910; E-mail: ozone@moe.gov.lb. (Website: <http://www.uneptie.org/ozat/pub/rumba/00mar.html>)*