

# Breeding For Resistance against Biological Stresses in Tomatoes: A Review

## Abstract

Diseases and pests have a substantial effect on tomato production, greatly affecting both the quantity and quality of this crucial vegetable crop. Although fungicides and pesticides have been important in controlling plant diseases and pests, their excessive usage raises significant environmental issues. Using dangerous compounds without adequate thought causes contamination, surpassing acceptable levels of chemical residues in tomatoes, and the development of new pest variations. Vegetable breeders are increasingly concentrating on developing cultivars with natural tolerance to biotic stresses to promote sustainability and environmental friendliness. The change in focus is intended to cultivate tomato cultivars with inherent resistance to diseases and pests, hence decreasing the need for chemical treatments. Advancements in creating high-yielding genetically resistant tomato cultivars are a result of detailed study on the genetic basis of pest and disease resistance in tomato crops, as well as the complex interactions between the host plant and pathogens. For effective breeding programs and pre-breeding activities, scientists and breeders must have access to sources of resistance and a thorough grasp of the genetic complexities involved. This requires examining the genetic composition of both the tomato plants and the different infections that are impacting them. Breeders may generate tomato cultivars with strong resistance to common diseases and pests by using the inherent defensive mechanisms found in certain tomato types via selective crossing. Continuing to study how hosts and pathogens interact and the molecular processes involved in resistance is crucial. This information offers vital insights on how to improve and expand resistance, leading to the creation of cultivars with long-lasting and wide-ranging resistance. Currently, the emphasis on breeding for resistance is a proactive and sustainable strategy for tomato production. Researchers aim to develop tomato cultivars that provide high yield and demonstrate tolerance to changing disease and pest stresses by integrating genetic knowledge with sophisticated breeding methods. This comprehensive method protects tomato crops and encourages environmental sustainability by decreasing the need on chemical inputs in agriculture.

**Keywords:** Tomato, biotic stresses, inheritance of resistance, biotechnological approaches, molecular marker and grafting.

## Introduction

One of the most important vegetable crops belonging to the Solanaceae family is the tomato, also known as *Solanum lycopersicum* L. Concerning the matter of human nutrition, it has developed into a significant commercial crop in recent years. The origin of tomatoes may be traced back to Peru, which is located in South America (Mueller *et al.* 2005). However, the major domestication of tomatoes took place in Mexico due to the availability of several

cultivated and wild species of the tomato that originated in this region (Rick 1969) (Fig1). The flavonoids, beta-carotene, lycopene, and vitamin C that it contains are among the nutrients that it offers. Furthermore, the anti-oxidative and anti-cancer capabilities of lycopene have contributed to the rise in popularity of tomatoes, particularly in contemporary times (Fentik 2017). A paucity of genetic diversity is seen in conventionally produced tomatoes. As a result, it has been proposed that the required resistance features should be transmitted from their wild type species (Dhall 2015) (Fig2). For the purpose of regulating the expression of their target genes and orchestrating the biochemical and physiological adjustments that are essential for stress tolerance and the modulation of plant development, transcription factors (TFs) attach themselves to their target genes upon the detection of stress (Rick and Chetelat1995). The most important problem is the high number of instances of illnesses and pests that come up during tomato production. The use of pesticides without discrimination in order to control illnesses, nematodes and insect-pests, is harmful to both the environment and human health. In contrast, there has been virtually little progress made in the development of insect resistance over the years. Host plant resistance is the most cost-effective strategy; nevertheless, this sort of resistance against insect pests is not at all durable because of the population pressure that insects exert on the host. As a result, there is development of new biotypes and a breakdown of resistance (Hichri et al., 2014). Varieties that have been launched up to this point have been connected with one or more personalities who are not desired, and as a result, they have not earned the popularity that they deserve. Vegetable yields have decreased by around forty percent due to the presence of insect pests (Singh et al.,2000). An economically significant crop, the tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* L.) was the first vegetable to be produced anywhere in the world (FAOSTAT 2011), and it is also a model plant species due to its diploid, relatively compact, and recently sequenced genome as well as its large genetic and genomic resources (Ranjan et al,2012). These characteristics give the tomato a number of distinctive characteristics. One of the most commercially significant foliar infections of tomato is the biotrophic ascomycete *Oidium neolyopersici*, which is responsible for the production of particulate matter (PM). This pathogen is found in both greenhouse and open field environments (Jones et al.,2001).

**Table1:**Majorinsect-pestsanddiseases of tomato.

Diseases	Insect-Pests	Reference
ToLCV, CMV, earlyblight, lateblight, nematodes, root-	Aphid, Fruitborer and	Dhall, 2015

knot, bacterialwilt(BW), tomatospotted wilt virus (ToSWV) and septorialeaf spot.	whitefly	
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Several related wild species of tomato, including *S. pennellii* and *S. habrochaites*, have been found to possess resistance to major insect pests. Among these species, *S. habrochaites* is particularly noteworthy as it serves as a significant source of arthropod resistance. Two distinct forms of *S. habrochaites*, namely *S. habrochaites* f. *glabratum* and *S. habrochaites* f. *typicum*, exhibit resistance to at least 16 pest species, as indicated in Table 1. Similarly, *S. pennellii* demonstrates resistance to a minimum of nine insect species, such as carmine, greenhouse whitefly, the potato aphid, and spider mites. Additional wild species, including *L. esculentum* var. *cerasiforme*, *S. cheesmanii*, *S. pimpinellifolium*, *S. chmielewskii*, *S. chilense*, and *S. peruvianum* exhibit different levels of resistance to insects (Dhall 2015). Although these wild tomato species provide a wide range of resources for pest resistance, their whole potential has not been completely used in insect resistance breeding projects. Although there have been some research on inheritance, most of these genetic resources are not being fully used and lack proper characterization.

Breeding for insect resistance in tomatoes has indeed posed more challenges compared to breeding for disease resistance. One significant obstacle that breeders face is what's known as "linkage drag." This refers to the tendency for genes controlling desirable traits, like insect resistance, to be physically close to genes that control undesirable traits or have negative effects on plant performance. When these genes are close together on the chromosome, they can be inherited together more frequently, leading to difficulties in separating the desired trait from the undesired ones during breeding processes. The presence of linkage drag complicates the development of insect-resistant tomato cultivars because breeders must navigate through a genetic landscape where improving one trait may inadvertently introduce or perpetuate unwanted traits. This can slow down the progress of breeding programs and make it challenging to produce commercially viable insect-resistant tomato varieties.

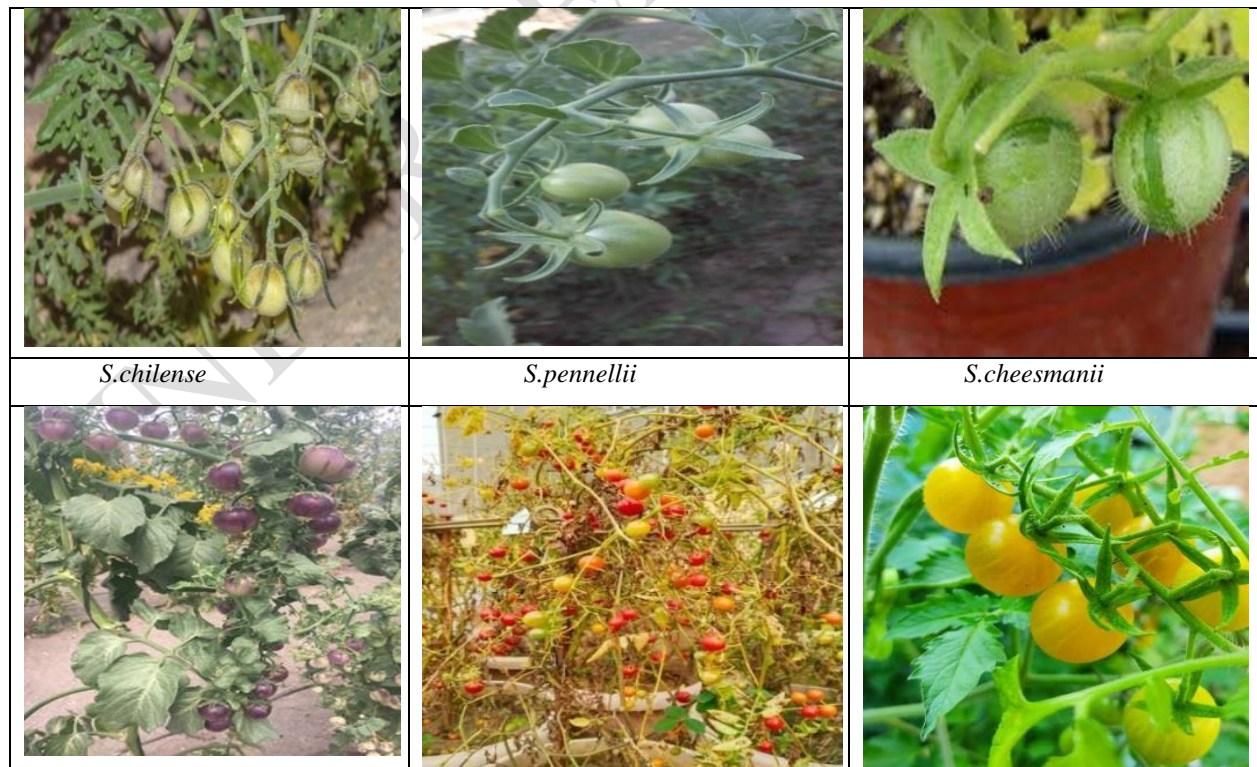
Tomato leaf curl New Delhi virus (ToLCNDV) is a kind of bipartite begomovirus that belongs to the genus Begomovirus and the family Geminiviridae. The isolates of the virus are naturally transmitted by the whitefly Bemisia tabaci, which is classified in the family Aleyrodidae in the order Hemiptera. This transmission happens in a cyclical and uninterrupted manner

(Brown et al, 2001). Research has shown that ToLCNDV, a begomovirus, has significant economic implications since it inflicts substantial damage on tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) cultivation. The prevalence of this begomovirus is higher in northern India, as reported by King et al. (2012), Varma and Malathi (2003), Zaidi et al. (2016), and Chakraborty (2008). Tomato wilt infections may be caused by several pathogens, including as nematodes, fungus, bacteria, viruses, and other biotic factors. *Fusarium oxysporum* is a diverse fungus that exists in more than one hundred various variations, each of which is often linked to a specific host and capable of causing disease. There are around one hundred distinct species of *F. oxysporum* that cause vascular wilts in flowering plants (Mansoor et al., 1997). This specific fungus is a hyphomycete that is found in the soil. A variety of insects, including whiteflies, mites, aphids, Lepidoptera (such as, beet armyworm, tomato fruitworm, cotton bollworm, Egyptian cottonworm, southern armyworm and soybean podworm), Coleoptera (such as tobacco flea beetle and colorado potato beetle), Diptera (such as fruit fly and leafminers), cutworms, thrips and sinkbugs are responsible for causing damage to tomato plants (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Resistance sources for biotic stresses in tomato.

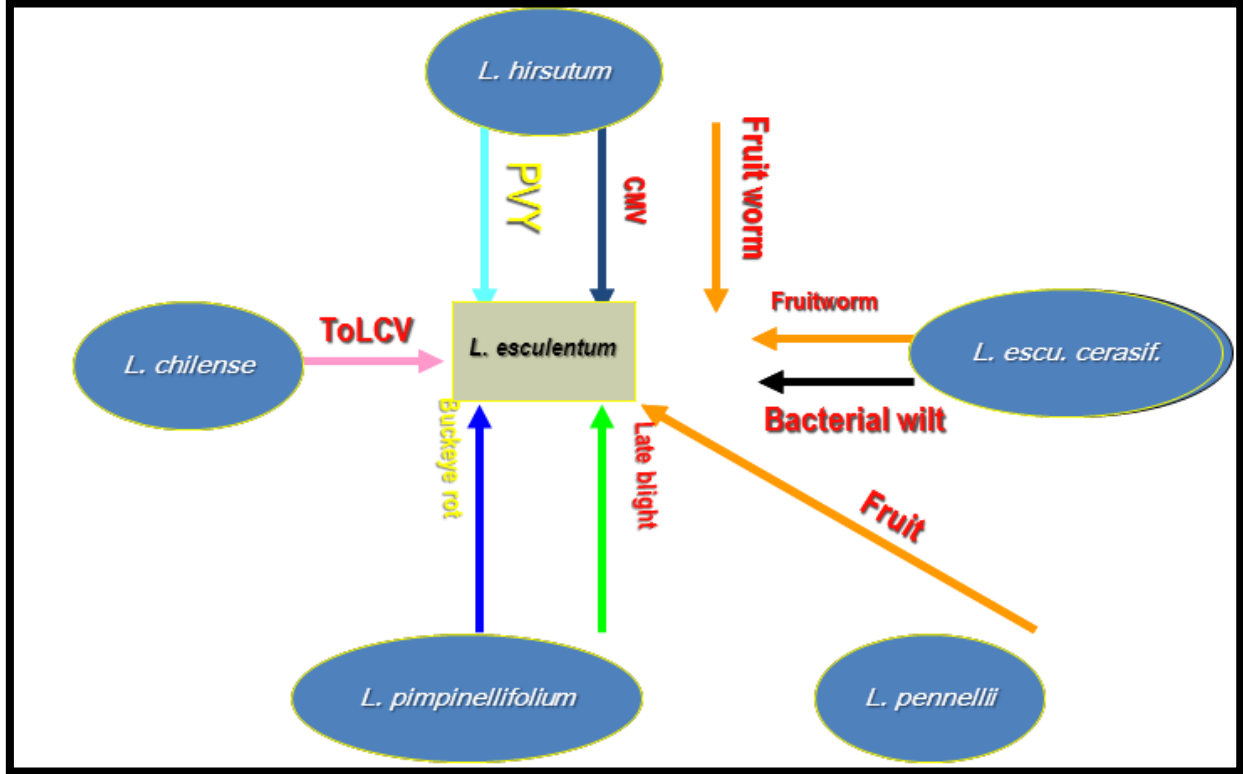
Resistant genes	Resistance against diseases	Resistance Sources	References
<i>Asc-1</i>	<i>Alternaria alternata</i> f.sp. <i>lycopersici</i>	<i>S. lycopersicum</i>	Domsch et al., 1980
<i>Am</i>	Alfalfa mosaic virus	<i>S. habrochaites</i>	Brandwagt et al., 2002
<i>Bs4</i>	<i>Xanthomonas campestris</i>	<i>S. lycopersicum</i>	Parrella et al., 2004
<i>Cmv</i>	Cucumber mosaic virus	<i>S. chilense</i>	Schorneck et al., 2004
<i>Cf-1</i>	<i>Cladosporium fulvum</i>	<i>S. lycopersicum var cerasiforme</i>	Stamova and Chetelat 2000
<i>Cf-2</i>	<i>C. fulvum</i>	<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Langford 1937
<i>Cf-3</i>	<i>C. fulvum</i>	<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Dixon et al., 1996
<i>Frl</i>	<i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f.sp. <i>radicis-lycopersici</i>		Hammond-Kosack and Jones 1993
<i>Hero</i>	<i>Globoderarostochiensis</i>	<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Vakalounalus et al., 1997
<i>I</i>	<i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> formae speciales <i>lycopersici</i>	<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Ernst et al., 2002
<i>Mi-1.2</i>	<i>Meloidogynespp</i>	<i>S. peruvianum</i>	Sela-Buurlage et

			al., 2001
<i>Ph-1</i>	<i>Phytophthora infestans</i>	<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Milligan et al., 1998
<i>Sw-5</i>	Tomato spotted wilt virus (ToSWV) and tomato chlorotic spot virus (ToCSV)	<i>S. peruvianum</i>	Bonde and Murphy 1952
<i>Sw-7</i>	ToSWV	<i>S. chilense</i>	Brommenschenkel and Tankslet 1997
<i>Ve1</i>	<i>Verticillium dahliae</i>	<i>S. lycopersicum</i>	Dockter et al., 2009
<i>Ty-1</i>	ToYLCV	<i>S. chilense</i>	Hammond-Kosack and Jones 1993
<i>Ty-2</i>	ToYLCV	<i>S. habrochaites</i>	Zamir et al., 1994
<i>Ty-3</i>	ToYLCV, ToMV	<i>S. chilense</i>	Ji et al., 2009
<i>Ty-4</i>	ToYLCV	<i>S. chilense</i>	Ji et al., 2007
	ToYLCV	<i>S. peruvianum</i>	Ji et al., 2009
<i>ol-1</i>	<i>Oidium neolycopersici</i>	<i>S. habrochaites</i>	Anbinder et al., 2009
<i>ol-2</i>	<i>O. neolycopersici</i>	<i>S. lycopersicum</i> var <i>cerasiforme</i>	Huang et al., 2000
<i>ol-3</i>	<i>O. neolycopersici</i>	<i>S. habrochaites</i>	De Giovanni et al., 2000



<i>S.peruvianum</i>	<i>S.pimpinellifolium</i>	<i>S.habrochaites</i>
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**Fig.1. Different wild tomato species for different resistant sources.**



**Fig.2. Introgression of wild species in cultivated tomato**

### Biotechnological Interventions

Tomatoes have long served as a model in plant research due to their genomic characteristics and growth habits, as noted by Ranjan et al, (2012). However, despite their high diversity and genetic variability, much of the potential of tomato landraces remains untapped, primarily due to limited genetic background information and performance data across diverse climates (Carelli et al. 2006). This scarcity of information hinders the effective utilization of these varieties in breeding programs.

Traditional breeding methods for quantitative and qualitative tomato traits are known to be time taking, often taking around five years for market commercialization (Resistant to Viral Diseases; Panthee and Gardner 2011; Bai and Carbonell et al, 2018 Lindhout 2007). This lengthy process highlights the need for more efficient breeding techniques to accelerate the development of improved tomato cultivars. Recent advancements in tomato tissue culture, mutagenesis, recombinant DNA technologies, transformation protocols, and transient expression assays offer promising avenues for enhancing tomato cultivars (Wolters et al. 1994; Chaudhary et al. 2019; Gosal et al. 2009; Fernandez et al. 2009). These technologies provide alternative means to traditional breeding methods and can significantly contribute to the improvement of tomato cultivars. One notable obstacle in tomato breeding is the incompatibility between

wild and cultivated tomatoes, which can impede the process of crossing and introgressing desirable traits. However, tissue culture technologies offer solutions to overcome such barriers. Techniques like embryo rescue, in vitro cultivation, protoplast fusion, and somatic hybridization can facilitate the successful transfer of beneficial traits from wild tomato species to cultivated varieties (Wolters et al. 1994).

Additionally, the process of introgression, which involves the introduction of desirable genes from wild relatives into domesticated species, may be accomplished via the use of marker-assisted breeding (Table 3). On account of the fact that the desired gene is only present in a single or a few locations across the genome, it is possible to choose against markers that indicate other regions of the wild type chromosomes. This will result in the deletion of those genes, which are often undesirable, from the offspring. There have been attempts made to generate plants that are resistant to a variety of biotic stressors, including viruses, bacteria, fungi, and insect pests, via the use of genetic engineering. Researchers have successfully developed a strong defense against Tomato mosaic virus (ToMV) infection by expressing solely the coat protein. This approach has also shown positive results in transgenic tomato plants, providing protection against several plant viruses such as Cucumber mosaic virus (CMV) and alfalfa mosaic virus (Huang et al, 2000). Progress in engineering insect resistance in transgenic tomato has been achieved (Shukla et al, 1998 and Fischhoff et al, 1987) (Table 4). Overall, the integration of modern biotechnological tools with traditional breeding methods holds immense potential for advancing tomato cultivars with improved traits, addressing challenges related to genetic diversity, climate adaptation, and pest/disease resistance.

**Table3:** Molecular markers used in tomato.

Sr.No.	Marker type	References
1	SNP	Babu et al, 2003; Jiménez-Gómez and Maloof 2009; Sim et al, 2011; Hamilton et al, 2011; Sim et al, 2012; Iquebal et al, 2013 and Viquez-Zamora et al, 2013
2	CAPS	Kevei et al, 2015
3	SSR	He et al, 2003; Ruiz et al, 2005; Grushetskaya et al, 2007; Sim et al, 2011 Ning et al, 2012 and Yang et al, 2014
4	AFLP	Todorovska et al, 2014
5	RFLP	Ning et al, 2012
6	SRAP	Tanksley et al, 1992 and Ruiz et al, 2005
7	SCAR	Al Shaye et al, 2018

**Table4:** Transgenes in tomato crop for resistance to viral diseases.

Transgenes	Resistant to	Reference
Cp gene	ToMV	Dhall R.K (2015)

<i>Cp</i> gene	ToYLCV	
Antisense RNA	ToMV	
Satellite RNA	CMV	
<i>N</i> gene	ToSWV	
Truncated C1 gene	CMV	
Two <i>Cp</i> genes	CMV	

## Grafting

The production of grafted seedling vegetables was created in Japan and Korea with the intention of minimizing the amount of main crop loss that was brought about by the infection of soil-born illnesses that were made worse by recurrent cropping. This was done with the intention of lowering the amount of main crop loss. The strong roots of the rootstock that was selected have the ability to display an unusual degree of resistance to severe soil-borne illnesses. These diseases include those that are caused by *Pseudomonas*, *Fusarium*, *Verticillium*, and *Phytophthora*. despite the fact that the degree of tolerance varies substantially depending on the rootstocks, the plant is able to tolerate nematodes, *Monosporascus cannonballus*, and *Didymellabryoniae* (Yang et al, 2014 and Edelstein et al, 1999). Depending on the level of resistance that is present in both the scion and the rootstocks, it is feasible that virus-resistant rootstocks might have a major influence on the scion infection of some viral infections (ToMV races). This would be the case if their presence was sufficient. There is a chance that the disease resistance of grafted seedlings is purely attributed to the rootstock roots' capacity to endure infections of this sort. This is a possibility. According to the agreement that has been achieved (Hanson et al, 2000 and Ji et al, 2007), the disease-prone features of the scion are not passed to the rootstock. On the other hand, the rootstock does not inherit the trait of being susceptible to disease.

Table 5: Resistance source of rootstock used in tomato grafting.

Resistance Source	Resistance to	References
<i>Solanum pennellii</i>	<i>Alternaria alternata</i> f.sp. <i>lycopersici</i>	Wanget al., 2006[65]
<i>S. habrochaites</i>	<i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> pv. tomato race 1	Van der Biezen et al, 1995
<i>S. chilense</i>	CMV, ToYLCV	Thapa et al, 2015
<i>S. neorickii</i>	<i>Botrytis cinerea</i>	Zamir et al, 1994
<i>S. pimpinellifolium</i>	Colour, quality, resistance to BWLB	Finkers et al, 2008
<i>S. lycopersicum</i>	Fungi and root rot	Danesh et al, 1994

<i>S.peruvianum</i>	ToSWVand RKN	Pierce et al,1971; Balint-Kurti et al,1994and Williamson et al,1994
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## Future Strategies

Developing cultivars with resistance or tolerance to diseases and insects is crucial for reducing losses caused by these biotic stressors. While chemical control methods are effective, they are often costly and can have long-lasting environmental impacts. Therefore, active research programs are essential to tap into the genetic diversity of existing germplasm, especially wild relatives, to create pre-bred lines with potential resistance traits. Efficient techniques for artificial inoculation of plantlets can greatly enhance the breeding process for disease and pest resistance. Gene pyramiding, combining multiple resistance genes into hybrids or varieties, is another important strategy to combat a range of biotic stressors effectively. Priority should be given to breeding efforts targeting integrated diseases and insect pests, such as TMV and leaf curl in tomatoes, to achieve optimal outcomes. Collaborative efforts between breeders and plant pathologists or entomologists are crucial for addressing these challenges effectively.

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