

# Italy: Tuta absoluta can be controlled with Dicyphus errans

Dicyphus errans has been shown to be a suitable biocontrol agent for Tuta absoluta, a harmful exotic lepidopteran known as tomato leafminer. This generalist predator shares various host plants with T. absoluta and these interactions could be used to improve the strategy to control the leafminer.

The Disafa research group at the University of Turin coordinated by entomologist Luciana Tavella studied host plant preferences, survival rate and development times on different species.

"Leafminers prefer hosts of the Solanum genus, while Dicyphus errans prefers San Roberto geranium, European black nightshade, courgettes and tomatoes. In all experiments, T. absoluta used the same host plants to lay eggs, which never developed on San Roberto geranium and courgettes as they were predated."

According to the results obtained, entomologists suggest associating tomatoes with courgettes and San Roberto geranium to maintain the leafminer population under control.

"Dicyphus errans could be perfect to contain leafminers on many vegetable species. They can also be used in integrated-organic control programmes."

**Lien article :** <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/177241/Italy-Tuta-absoluta-can-be-controlled-with-Dicyphus-errans>