

Newly Released Tobacco Varieties Can Keep Disease At Bay

JACKSON, TENN.

Higher yield and disease resistance. It's what every tobacco producer wants. For the last decade the University of Tennessee and the University of Kentucky have partnered in the Kentucky-Tennessee Tobacco Improvement Initiative (KTTII) to create varieties that would do just that; yield more pounds per acre while withstanding the damaging effects of diseases like black shank and blue mold.

To date, their efforts have been extremely successful. The program has released three disease resistant burley varieties and three dark varieties. And in 2008, KTTII cultivars were estimated to comprise more than 75 percent of U.S. burley production and 20 percent of U.S. dark tobacco production.

The latest developments by researchers with KTTII have yielded two new burley varieties. KT 209LC and KT 210LC were released in March of 2009. They should be available for sale to farmers next spring. Researchers say with the new varieties, they have improved on the already excellent cultivars.

"KT 209LC has superior black shank resist-

ance to fusarium wilt, which will be very beneficial to growers in the Ohio River region of Kentucky where this disease has caused problems."

Of course producers in both states have felt the devastating effects of black shank, which



can, in some cases wipe out an entire crop. In a two-year black shank trial study, KT 209LC posted survival rates that were, on average, 11 percent greater than KT 206LC, the previous leading cultivar for black shank resistance, and 49 percent higher than TN 90LC. The new variety also averaged higher yields.

"Our tobacco breeding program has had a tremendous impact on the farm economy in Tennessee and Kentucky," says Miller. "We hope to continue to advance our varieties to create a better product for the producers in our region."

Currently, the new varieties are being grown at the Highland Rim Research and Education Center in Springfield, Tennessee. Interested producers can learn more about them by visiting the Center on June 25, 2009 for the Tobacco, Beef and More Field Day. Sponsored by UT AgResearch, visitors can hear presentations from University of

Tennessee and University of Kentucky experts and also tour the fields.

For more information on the new cultivars or on the Tobacco, Beef and More Field Day, visit the [Web site](http://highlandrim@tennessee.edu) <http://highlandrim@tennessee.edu>. △



ance and high yield potential," says Dr. Bob Miller, University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture Professor. "It has higher black shank resistance than any other burley cultivar. It also has high resistance to many other diseases."

"The other new variety, KT 210LC, has good black shank resistance and moderate resist-