

## ELECTRONIC FIELD BLIGHT MONITOR

Farm Electronics is developing a field blight risk monitor that could help significantly reduce the volume of anti-blight spray chemical applied to crops during the growing season.

The battery-operated monitor, located in the field, is linked to sensors situated close to the top level of the potato leaf canopy, measuring relative humidity and temperature. Information is read directly from large-scale digital displays.

Blight spores multiply more freely in weather conditions above 10oC and above 90o relative humidity. Prolonged periods when both temperature and humidity are high dramatically increase the risk, so the monitor records the number of high-risk hours in each 24-hour period.

If the blight risk conditions are registered for 11 hours in each of two consecutive 24-hour periods, then preventive spraying should take place. The monitor displays the total of high-risk hours for each day over a three-day period and allows the farmer to assess whether spraying is necessary.

The system has undergone extensive field trials and the company is confident it can reduce field spray applications.

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