Red spider mite on tomato
*Tetranychus spp.; local name: Utiti wekundu (Swahili)*

### Prevention
- Avoid water stress. If necessary, irrigate the crop regularly, and apply mulch to reduce water evaporation.
- Avoid continuous cropping of tomato and solanaceous plants (e.g. eggplant, capsicum and Irish potato)
- Practise good field sanitation e.g. removing residues of the previous crop, removing alternative hosts e.g. weeds.
- Clean stakes and twines with water and soap and dry in the sun for one week before transferring to a new crop.
- Intercropping tomato with garlic, basil or onion (repellents).
- Spray water regularly on plants to reduce dust since RSM does well in dusty conditions.
- Avoid planting new crops next to an already infested field (tomato or other crops)
- Plant tolerant varieties e.g. Rosol
- Intercrop with pigeon peas and spider plant, host plants for the predatory mites of spider mites.

### Monitoring
- Inspect the crop regularly to determine the presence and level of infestation during the growing period
- Assess leaves particularly the lower leaves (underside) and the main vein
- Inspect whorl leaves for spots and fine webbing; Brown or silvery colour as a result of RSM feeding; and white speckling on the fruits
- Randomly select 20 tomato plants and assess the level of mite damage of three leaflets per plant using a leaf index ranking from 1 – 5 (1 is 1-5% yellow spots on the leaf, 5 is 75-100%)
- Take action when the average exceeds scale 1.

### Direct Control
- Overhead irrigation reduces the RSM population.
- Use neem (Azadiractin) three to four times per season starting to spray 15 days after transplanting (2.5 to 3l per Ha)
- Spray 2% horticultural oil (85ml in 4 l of water) in a six week interval
- Garlic oil spray (85g fine chopped garlic soaked one day in 50 mls mineral oil plus 10 mls soap, stir and add 1 l water) spray twice per season.
- Biological control – use of *Phytoseiulus persimilis, Amblyseius californicus*
- Abamectin
- Toxic aquatic organisms; avoid applying near water ways
- High risk to bees. Don’t apply during flowering
- Bifenthin
- Moderately hazardous (WHO II)
- Highly toxic to bees
- Toxic to aquatic organisms
- Sulphur
- Slightly hazardous (WHO III)
- Broad spectrum acaricide
- Sulphur is attractive to livestock hence keep livestock away
- Amitraz
- Moderately hazardous (WHO II)
- Spray only once on the underside of the leaves especially after staking and pruning
- Carbamate
- Not classified by the WHO