

Disease-resistant tomatoes fight lethal pests

The following is an excerpt.

In the battle against thrips, Cornell breeder Martha Mutschler-Chu has developed a new weapon: a tomato that packs a powerful one-two punch to deter the pests and counter the killer viruses they transmit.

Adapting a novel form of insect resistance discovered in a wild plant native to Peru, Mutschler-Chu, professor of plant breeding and genetics, first isolated the resistance. She found that it was mediated by droplets of sugar esters, called acylsugars, that are produced and exuded from hairs (trichomes) that cover the plants. The acylsugars don't kill the insects, but deter them from feeding or laying eggs on the plants. The process does not require genetic modification and is completely safe.

View the original article here: [Disease-resistant tomatoes fight lethal pests](#)