**Solanaceae**
The Potato Family

94 genera
2,950 species

**Distribution:**
A cosmopolitan family, but main areas of distribution occur in tropical and subtropical regions, especially in Central and South America.

**Economic Uses:**
- This family contains many species of great economic importance. These include potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*), and the peppers (various *Capsicum* spp.).
- Many members are also cultivated for their alkaloid content. The most important example is tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*).
- Various members of this family are also grown as ornamentals.

**Characteristic features:**
- Herbs, shrubs, trees and vines.
- Leaves alternate; plants often with a 'solanaceous smell'.
- Complex chemistry with solanaceous tropane alkaloids (belladonna, nicotine, capsaicin, etc.)
- Stems with internal phloem
- Flowers: 5 connate sepals, 5 connate petals: forming variously tubular corolla; 5 stamens, filaments adnate to corolla, sometimes anthers connivent; usually 2(-5) carpels, connate and oriented obliquely to the median plane of the flower; superior ovary.
- Fruit: usually a berry (occ. a capsule, schizocarp or nutlet).

**Required genus: Solanum**
- Ca. 1,400 species, mostly tropical.
- Herbs or shrubs.
- Corolla regular, *rotate*, 5-merous, deeply lobed.
- Anthers forming a tube around the style (connivent), with terminal openings; filaments short.
- Fruit: a berry, usually 2-locular.

**Asterids:** Reduced Phylogeny of Required Families

![Diagram](image)

References for further inquiry: