

Vegetable Pest Alerts

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Welcome to this week's pest alert!

What to be on the lookout for...

CABBAGE WHITE BUTTERFLY (IMPORTED CABBAGEWORM)

Cabbage white butterflies are the adults of the imported cabbageworm. The butterflies are a common sight amongst cole crop growers, especially in broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower. Adults have one or two distinctive black spots on their white forewings, and lay eggs singly on the underside of leaves. Eggs are white to yellow, oblong, and are attached to the leaf by its end. The larvae feed on these crops as they develop and can cause severe and widespread damage.

Monitor susceptible crops by looking for eggs, small feeding holes concentrated in the center of leaves and developing heads, and the flutter of the adult butterfly. Finding the caterpillar itself can be difficult, as they easily blend in with the leaves. Scout heading crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage) as soon as heading starts. Greens should be monitored sooner. Treatment thresholds differ between plant type and growth stage. See [this factsheet](#) from UMass Amherst Extension for details.

Management of this pest includes Bt sprays, insecticides, and biological controls. See [this section](#) of the New England Management Guide for current insecticides labeled for imported cabbageworm.



Photo 1. Top: Imported cabbageworm egg on underside of cabbage leaf. (Photo: UMass Extension Vegetable Program). Middle: Imported cabbageworm larva (Photo: M. Ng, UConn Extension) Bottom: Cabbage white butterfly (Photo: J.F. Dill, UMaine Extension).

ASPARAGUS BEETLE

Common asparagus beetles are active. There are two beetle pests of asparagus, the common asparagus beetle and the spotted asparagus beetle. They overwinter as adults in protected areas along fields, feed and lay eggs in the crop, pupate in the soil, and have 2 or sometimes 3 generations per year. Common asparagus beetle larvae may cause severe defoliation of ferns and decline of the planting. Spotted asparagus beetles larvae feed only on berries.

During harvest, scout for adults and eggs on sunny afternoons. Treat spears if >10% of the plants are infested with beetles or 1%-2% have eggs or damage. If possible, spot spray to help conserve natural enemies. During harvest, snap or cut spears close to the soil surface daily. A tiny metallic green wasp, *Tetrastichus asparagi*, parasitizes asparagus beetle eggs. They have been known to provide very effective control, parasitizing up to 70% of the eggs. Lady beetle larvae and other predators may also be active; they will consume both eggs and larvae as well as asparagus aphids. Entrust, PyGanic, Suffoil, or Radiant can be sprayed. Surround WP may also work as a repellent.



Photo 2. Common Asparagus beetle adults and eggs (left; photo by Anna-Kristin, Abiding Acres Farm) and larvae (right)

Continue to be on the lookout for the following pests:

- [Brassica flea beetle](#)
- [White grub](#)
- [Allium leafminer](#)
- [Cabbage root maggot, seed corn maggot, and onion maggot](#)

Thanks for reading, and happy planting!

This report was prepared by Shuresh Ghimire and Maggie Ng, UConn Extension. All photos in this publication are credited to UConn Extension Vegetable IPM Program unless otherwise noted.

Contact us!

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