

Vegetable Pest Alerts

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EXTENSION

What to be on the lookout for...

Brassica caterpillar pests:

Cross-striped cabbageworm. Unlike the other major caterpillar pests on brassicas, the cross-striped cabbageworm lays its eggs in batches (3 to 25) rather than singly, so caterpillars emerge in clusters. Egg batches are yellow, flattened, overlapping like fish scales, and attached to the lower leaf surfaces. Larvae grow to 3/4" long in 2 to 3 weeks. Caterpillars produce small holes in leaves until only veins remain, or target terminal buds and sprouts, or may burrow into heads. Plants with larvae present are often completely skeletonized. Scout weekly for caterpillars and damage. Spray if 5% of the plants are infested. Use selective insecticides to preserve parasitic wasps. See <https://nevegetable.org/crops/insect-control-3> for spray options.



Cross-striped cabbageworms on broccoli (Photos: Jeremy Whipple, MPTN)

Continue to look out for imported cabbageworm (ICW) and diamond back moth (DBM)



ICW (left) and DBM (right) larvae (photos: S. Ghimire)

Damage of ICW includes round or ragged feeding holes and deposits of wet, green or brownish frass. DBM when disturbed, wiggle vigorously and may drop off the plant on a string of silk. DBM feeding causes small, round holes and tends to be spread across the foliage rather than concentrated in the head.

Scout fields by checking leaves (top and bottom) on 25 plants across the field. Treat plants between the start of heading and harvest if 20% or more of the plants are infested. The most critical time to scout and apply chemical controls is just prior to head formation. Use a 10% to 15% threshold throughout the season for kale, collards, mustard, and other leafy greens.

Parasitic wasps that attack caterpillars include *Cotesia rubecula* on ICW and *Diadegma insulare* on DBM; their small white cocoons may be found on leaves. DBM has become resistant to many synthetic and microbial insecticides. Even if you are getting excellent control of this pest with the materials presently being used, you should alternate between effective materials to retard development of resistance. Newer materials and the aizawai strain of *Bacillus thuringiensis* will usually provide better control of resistant DBM than older products. See <http://nevegetable.org/crops/insect-control-3> for spray options.

Colorado potato beetle adults have been spotted. To control, targeting small larvae is most effective, since a smaller dose can kill them, and their feeding damage will be less. This pest is hard to control, specially organically. Because they disperse themselves so poorly, cultural controls like crop rotation and physical barriers including trench traps surrounding fields, early-planted trap crops, and mulching with straw can delay and reduce infestation.

Labeled conventional products include pyrethroids, neonicotinoids, novaluron (e.g. Rimon), cyromazine (e.g. Trigard), and diamides (e.g. Verimark, Exirel). There is a new RNAi product called Calantha. For organic growers, spinosad (e.g. Entrust) is most effective but can only be used 2 times on only 1 generation of CPB per season. Other options for organic growers include azadirachtin products (e.g. Aza-Direct, Azatin O, Neemix) or pyrethrin (e.g. Pyganic), and the bioinsecticide *Beauveria bassiana* (e.g. Mycotrol O, Botanigard). See <http://nevegetable.org/crops/insect-control-18> for action threshold and management options.



Colorado potato beetle larvae (Photo: S. Ghimire)

Cucurbit anthracnose

Anthracnose of cucurbits is a serious disease of cucurbit crops in warm, rainy summers. Lesions can form on seedlings, leaves, petioles, stems, and fruits. The pathogen affects cucumbers, melon, squash, watermelon, and pumpkins.

Symptoms on seedlings occur as wilt of cotyledons and stem lesions near the soil line when the fungus is seed borne. On mature leaves, small pale yellow, water-soaked areas emerge near veins and enlarge rapidly, turning tan to dark brown. The spots may coalesce, resulting in blighting, distortion, and death of entire leaves. The dry, dead centers of old lesions often crack and tear, giving a ragged appearance to the foliage. Lesions on petioles and stems are elongate and slightly sunken. Young fruit may turn black and die if their pedicels are infected, while older fruit develop circular, noticeably

sunken, dark-green to black lesions which may exhibit a salmon colored exudate in moist weather.



Anthrachnose on cucumber leaf. Photo: Dr. Lina Quesada, NC State Vegetable Pathology Lab

To reduce the disease spread/severity, improve ventilation if the seedlings are raised indoor, and reduce overhead irrigation. See <https://nevegetable.org/crops/disease-control-18> for spray options.

Thanks for reading!

Contact us!

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