

Bugs

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its taste-buds with weeds, like pigweed and ragweed.

Unfortunately, most of the damage from the tarnished plant bug goes unnoticed or is confused with other types of injury because the bug is a shy critter.

What it lacks in shyness it makes up in activity, and getting enough food to keep its 1/4-inch long, fragile form in top shape keeps it busy.

The older bugs are brownish in color, with mottled areas of yellow. The young bugs, called nymphs, are light green and very bashful—seeking cover whenever they're disturbed.

Adult plant bugs overwinter in any protected area, such as in fence rows, wooded areas, or tall grass. In April they migrate from their winter quarters and feed on the buds of trees and shrubs, and on the new growth of early Spring plants. When more delectable host plants are available, they soon fly to them.

Lygus bugs feed on either the plant's actively growing tissue or on the developing reproductive tissue. During an early warm Spring, adults will become more active and pose more of a problem on early varieties.

Eggs of overwintering adults are laid from April to

June directly in the leaves, new growth, or in buds or flowers. These eggs hatch in about 10 days into young nymphs which feed for about 3 weeks before becoming adults and completing the life cycle.

There are four or five overlapping broods each year.

The plant bugs do not quit eating until late Fall, and can often be found munching in crop fields into late November.

When a lygus bug eats, it penetrates its dinner with a needle-like mouth, called a stylet. A watery saliva is secreted that liquifies the plant's tissues. Then, the bug draws the liquid up, like it's drinking through a straw.

The plant, when punctured by the plant bug, reacts. It sets in motion a series of wound responses.

In strawberries, the plant bug's bite stops the growth of the berry in the immediate area. Often the seeds on one side of the strawberry are destroyed or hollowed out. Growth ceases and the area becomes hard and greenish to black in color.

Whether you have or don't have a problem with plant bugs depends on your surrounding field conditions.

To know just how many plant bugs are in your patch will require a bug-by-bug count of adults and nymphs, if you can catch them unaware.

Penn State recommends

that growers should sample 50 fruit clusters for each berry variety on a weekly schedule starting when fruit begins to form. When an average of 20 to 25 bugs are found per fifty flower clusters, it would be advisable to apply a pesticide, they point out.

For control, Penn State calls for 4-8 pounds of Malathion 25 percent WP per acre or 57 percent EL at 1.5 to 3 pints per acre. If Parathion 8 Aqua is used Penn State recommends 0.25-0.5 pints per acre. Endosulfan (Thiodan) 3 EC takes 1.33 quarts per acre in 200 gallons of water.

Penn State warns that

Endosulfan should not be reapplied within 15 days or more than twice within a 35 day period when fruit is present. Malathion should not be applied within 3 days of harvest, Parathion within 14 days, and Endosulfan within 4 days



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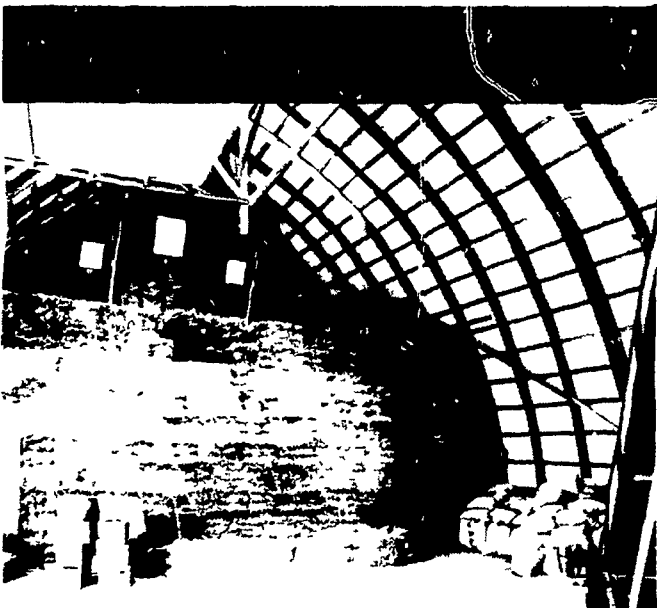
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