



Cooperative Extension

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Injury

Adults and nymphs pierce plant tissue with needle-like mouth parts and suck out plant juices from buds, blossoms, pods, stems, fruit, and seeds. Immature fruit and pods punctured by stink bugs become deformed as they develop, or drop off the plant. Seeds within pods turn brown and become flattened and shriveled, and fruit become unpalatable. Stink bugs damage bean plants and bean pods, green and red tomato fruit, okra pods, stems of melons, asparagus, peppers, corn kernels through the husks, and occasionally attack cabbage, eggplant, horseradish, mustard, pea and turnip. Most stink bug damage occurs in late summer or early fall.

Description

At least 10 species of stink bugs are associated with gardens in New Jersey, but the most common are the green, *Acrosternum hilare* (Say), and brown, *Euschistus servus* (Say), stink bug. All adult stink bugs are shield shaped and about 1/2" to 5/8" long. Green stink bugs are bright green with a narrow orange-yellow line bordering the body regions. Brown stink bugs are dull grayish brown. Eggs are barrel-shaped or kettle-shaped, about 1/30 inch long, and stand on end in double rows. There are five nymphal instars, which are similar to adults in shape but smaller and without wings. Green stink bug nymphs are generally black when small, becoming green as they mature. Brown stink bug nymphs are pale or light green when young, and have either a light or dark form.

Life History

Stink bugs pass the winter as adults in protected areas such as fence rows, ditch banks, and roadsides. They become active in late spring and feed on many plants including fruit, ornamentals, weeds, and vegetables. Females deposit several hundred eggs in clusters in groups of about 30 eggs on host plants. Eggs hatch in 5-7 days and nymphs feed for about 4 to 6 weeks before becoming adults. There are 1 or 2 generations per season in New Jersey.

Management

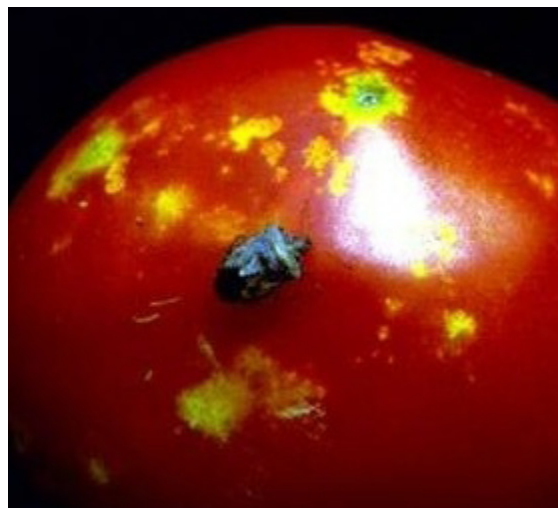
1. Weed control helps reduce stink bug populations. However, stink bugs are highly mobile and will readily fly from nearby fields into gardens. Thus, initial stinkbug infestations appear along garden borders.
2. Hand pick and destroy eggs, nymphs and adults. Stink bugs give off a repulsive odor, and although not harmful, it is best to wear protective gloves.
3. Stink bugs are often difficult to detect and manage in the garden. They are extremely mobile and fly in and out of the garden, and avoid detection by hiding deep in the foliage of the plants. If stink bug damage to the plant or fruit is increasing, or if more than 1 to 3 stink bugs are found per 10 plants, depending on vegetable, an insecticide treatment may be warranted. Thorough coverage of the plant foliage and proper timing of sprays

are important for effective control. Read and follow all label directions, restrictions and precautionary statements before using any pesticide.

4. Not all stink bugs cause crop damage. Several species are predators and feed on a wide range of insect pests. It is important that you learn to distinguish predatory stink bugs from plant feeding stink bugs before a pesticide is considered to avoid harming the beneficial stink bugs.

Photo Captions

Page 1 (l-r): brown stink bug adult, green stink bug and egg mass - University of Florida, Brown stink bug nymph.



Stink bug on tomato



Stink bug pepper damage

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May 2008

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