

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/entomology/extension/extension.htm>

## Kansas Insect Newsletter

For Agribusinesses, Applicators, Consultants, and Extension Personnel

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April 21, 2006 No. 5

## Alfalfa:

Alfalfa weevil treatments are continuing across the state, especially north of Highway 36. Some fields are being treated for the second time. Larval feeding seems to be much accelerated this year, probably due to the warmer weather. This can be both good and bad. The bad part: weevil eggs are hatching and larval damage occurs rapidly. Thus, feeding damage which would usually take 2-3 weeks is, this year, being accomplished in about 7-10 days. Therefore, you have less time to sample and make your management decision. The “good” aspect: egg hatch and larval damage should be more concentrated and not spread out over a longer period of time. This should increase the potential that one, well-timed treatment will suffice.

Still receiving reports of highly variable aphid populations. Also received reports of many different combinations and rates of insecticides used to control weevils and aphids. The insecticides listed in the 2006 Alfalfa Insect Management Guide for **pea aphids** and **alfalfa weevils** have proven consistently effective at the various rates listed in all of our trials over the last several years. **Cowpea aphids** have not been present in sufficient numbers to gather efficacy data nor have pea aphid populations approached treatment thresholds. But all insecticides tested have been highly effective without needing a combination of treatments. Gallonage and thorough coverage of the plants seem to be the primary consideration. These products should provide residual control for 21-28 days. However, one of the problems with aphids is they sometimes migrate into alfalfa after new growth has occurred thus they do not come into contact with foliage that has been treated. The treatment may have eliminated any predators and parasites which can be very good at controlling aphids, thus the aphid populations have escaped the insecticide and their natural enemies. These aphid populations need to be monitored and if re-treatment is necessary, ensure pre-harvest intervals are adhered to for the insecticides used. For treatment thresholds, insecticides, and pre-harvest intervals, consult the 2006 Alfalfa Insect Management Guide available at all county extension offices.



Pea aphid



Cowpea aphid

Jeff Whitworth, Phil Sloderbeck

## Tracer Section 3 Federal Label additions:

Dow AgroSciences announced recently (April 12, 2006) that changes to their federal Tracer label effectively eliminates the need for some Section 24(c) and 18 labels. Future Tracer labels will include statements about control of armyworms on some legumes, grass forages, seed production, pastures and rangeland, and for the control of certain foliar insects of cereal grains. Refer to the [dowagro.com](http://dowagro.com) Label/MSDS web page for more information.

Randy Higgins

## Sustainable Agriculture Network Publication for Insect Management:

A publication entitled "Manage Insects on Your Farm" is available for free download at the following web site: [www.sare.org/publications/insect.htm](http://www.sare.org/publications/insect.htm). The USDA information notice states that the book contains many examples of producers successfully dealing with real-life pest management problems in a commercial setting. Hopefully, readers of that publication also have the opportunity to recognize that our Kansas Insect Management recommendations are based on firm science with the intent of providing IPM strategies that are effective, affordable, and environmentally sound.

Randy Higgins

## Maggots dropping from oak trees not related to itch mite problem!!

The tiny, yellowish maggots dropping right now from oak trees are not involved in the itch mite bite outbreaks we have experienced over the Midwestern USA the last two years. These tiny maggots belong to an undescribed species of midge that apparently develops in the catkins of oaks and have been dropping from these trees recently. Nothing is known about their life cycle; thus we don't know where they pupate nor if they have more than one generation/year. In contrast, the midge larvae that serve as hosts for the itch mite are just forming the galls on the edges of pin oak leaves. If the midge and mite populations develop as

in the previous two years, we should start to experience the mite bites late in July.

Alberto Broce

## Asparagus Insect Pests.....

Vegetable growers and home gardeners have begun to harvest asparagus. Newly emerged spears are subject to two insect pests: cutworms and asparagus beetles. Cutworm species with grazing habits seldom cause damage because spears elongate quite rapidly past above the soil surface to which the cutworms confine themselves. However, climbing cutworms will ascend spears to feed on the succulent tips. Fortunately, climbing cutworms are the exception rather than the norm, and therefore seldom are cause for concern.

On the other hand, asparagus beetles require attention if the desired quality of produce is to be maintained.



Asparagus beetle



Eggs on spear



Young larvae on spear



Feeding scars



Inky spit

Beetles per se do little damage. However, they attach their eggs to newly formed spears, and this will decrease marketability. Similarly, larval feeding on tips creates holes/scarring which consumers find objectionable. And larger larvae produce an “inky spit” which causes an objectionable black stain.

Thus during the relatively brief production and harvest period, growers are advised to frequently monitor for the presence of beetles, and regularly inspect and cut/harvest new spears. If insecticide treatments are warranted, select a product registered for use against this pest. Some suggested products are: Sevin products and HiYield Indoor/Outdoor Broad Use Insecticide, Spectracide Bug Stop Multi-Purpose Insect Control Concentrate, Bonide Vegetable, Fruit & Flower and Bonide Liquid Rotenone-Pyrethrins Spray.

Bob Bauernfeind

## Defoliating Beetles .....



Various species of May/June beetles



May/June beetles emergence holes in soil

The current flight activities of early-season May/June beetle species have caused some questions. Aside from the annoyance of their buzzing and bumping into people out for a pleasant evening stroll, and their constant banging against the screens on “lighted” windows, people are concerned about imminent feeding damage to trees and shrubs by the beetles, and later, damage to lawns caused by grubs. The holes-in-the-ground are beetle emergence holes.

Only under the heaviest of beetle flights might they defoliate certain (not all) trees and shrub species. Different species of May/June beetles have preferred host preferences. Thus, for instance, on a property with elm, maple, oak, walnut, dogwood and honeysuckle and oak trees/plantings, all but the oak might be defoliated if the *fusca* May/June beetle species are present, whereas if *rubiginosa* dominate, only the elm trees would be defoliated.

Defoliations may seemingly occur “overnight”. If, however, leaf-feeding activities are noted at the onset, insecticides can be used in an attempt to reduce the beetle populations. However, this is impractical for homeowners to do on their own because of the impossibility to attain adequate coverage (especially of large trees) with hose-end and/or handheld pump-up sprayers. Thus a commercial tree sprayer would best be contacted. However even this is no guarantee ---- it might be difficult to fit a call-in customer to an already busy spray schedule. Or, if rain or windy weather prevents spray applications, the beetle likely will have caused the defoliation by the time conditions finally permit treatment applications.

But not to worry. Early-season defoliations are temporary, and in 3-4 weeks, trees will produce a new flush of foliage. In the end, the trees will be none the worse for wear.



Defoliated elm



June 2, 2005

Bob Bauernfeind

## Pine tip moth activities.....

Nantucket pine tip moths are a pest of most species of pine. Tip moth larvae feed in and kill tender pine shoots. Under severe and unchecked populations, the destruction of shoots and possible death of branches

causes trees to have a distorted and unthrifty appearance. Especially in Christmas tree plantations, Nantucket pine tip moths are of economic concern.



Pine tip moth damaged tree



Needle damage



Dead needles removed

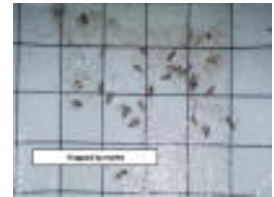
The first generation flight of Nantucket pine tip moths is underway in the Manhattan area. The first-of-the-year moth was recorded April 4. The recommendation for the initiation is 10 days after the peak moth flight. In the short span of 10 days, a distinct impressive peak has yet to occur. Monitoring will be continued, and advice on the initiation of sprays forthcoming.



Nantucket pine tip moth



Pheromone Trap



Trapped tip moths

Bob Bauernfeind

## Weekly Report from the Kansas State University Insect Diagnostic Laboratory:

The following samples were submitted to the Insect Diagnostic Laboratory from April 3 through April 20, 2006:

- 4-3-2006, Shawnee County: Indian Meal Moth in home.
- 4-4-2006, Riley County: Red Carpenter Ants in home.
- 4-4-2006, Bourbon County: Hackberry psyllids.
- 4-4-2006, Norton County: Small Dung Flies in school.
- 4-4-2006, Sedgwick County: Fungus Gnats in home.
- 4-5-2006, Saline County: Varied Carpet Beetle.
- 4-5-2006, Riley County: Digger Bee in yard.
- 4-7-2006, Saline County: Leaf-cutting bees on home.
- 4-10-2006, Riley County: Lone Star Tick off person.
- 4-11-2006, Morris County: Larder Beetle in home.
- 4-12-2006, Harvey County: Drugstore Beetles in home.
- 4-12-2006, Reno County: barklice on clothing.
- 4-19-2006, Ford County: Rough Oak Bullet Gall on Bur oak.

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4-19-2006, Ford County: Varied Carpet Beetles in home.  
4-19-2006, Barton County: March Flies in yard.  
4-19-2006, Harvey County: Red Carpenter Ants in home.  
4-20-2006, Riley County: Red Spotted Purple caterpillars in trees.  
4-20-2006, Johnson County: Termites in home.

If there are any questions regarding these samples or about the identification of any arthropod please contact the Insect Diagnostician at 785-532-4739 or at [bbrown@ksu.edu](mailto:bbrown@ksu.edu) .

Bobby Brown

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Sincerely,

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