

Vegetable & Fruit News

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Bean Leaf Beetles Showing Up in Early Snap Beans

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Bean leaf beetles (BLB), *C. trifucata*, are showing up in snap beans in some areas of the Eastern Shore. This sporadic pest has the potential to cause serious damage to snap beans, soybeans, and other legume crops. Adult beetles are relatively small and range in color from yellow to red with varying numbers of black spots along their wing covers (Fig. 1). The distinguishing characteristic is a small black triangle on the upper side where the wing covers meet. This can help distinguish this pest from the spotted cucumber beetle, which is



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Figure 1. Bean leaf beetle adults with characteristic highlighted. Photo: V. Yurchak, UMD

considered only a minor foliar pest of legumes.

There are typically three generations per year, with the first generation of overwintering adults emerging early in the season around the same time as snap bean planting. Adult females lay a total of 250-350 eggs over their lifetime at the base of snap bean plants. The larval stage feeds on roots in the soil but is typically not considered a major concern for the crop. The adult beetle causes the majority of the damage and can severely defoliate early seedlings and even kill plants when infestations are high enough. If occurring later in the growing season, BLB can also cause feeding scars on pods resulting in an unmarketable crop.

Spotted Wing Drosophila Active Consider Management in Cherries and Blueberries

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We have detected spotted wing drosophila adults in our traps at the Western Maryland Research and Education Center; therefore, spotted wing drosophila are likely active around the state.

On farm monitoring can help track activity and population trends but thresholds are still complicated for spotted wing drosophila. In cherries, initiate management programs when 5-10% of regional traps are capturing adults and fruit are at a susceptible stage.¹ In blueberries, in many cases early season cultivars will be ok even without management.² You can increase confidence in skipping early season sprays by sampling fruit for larvae.²

More conservatively, you can initiate management programs in cherries or blueberries as soon as fruit are susceptible, and adults are being captured. Both cherries and blueberries become susceptible as soon as the fruit color begins to change and become increasingly at risk the further ripe they become.

In terms of insecticide products, Insecticide Resistance Action Committee (IRAC) modes of action groups 28, 5, 3A, 1A, and 1B all provide good to excellent control depending on the specific active ingredient used.³ Products and rankings for small fruit can be found in Demchak and Hamby 2023.³ Remember to rotate modes of action to reduce the risk of insecticide resistance developing and to follow all label instructions. The label is the law.



Figure 1. Male (black circle) and female (wide red circle) spotted wing drosophila surrounded by other drosophila species that were captured in a Scentry SWD trap. Photo: Shea III

References and other recommended resources:

1. Perkins, J., and J. Wilson. 2024. The 2024 Outlook for spotted wing drosophila in Michigan cherry orchards. Michigan State University News. <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the-outlook-for-spotted-wing-drosophila-in-michigan-cherry-orchards>
2. Isaacs, R., Wise, J., and C. Garcia-Salazar. 2022. Insecticide options for spotted wing drosophila control in blueberry. Michigan State University News. <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/insecticide-options-for-spotted-wing-drosophila-control-in-blueberry>
3. Demchak, K., and K. Hamby. 2023. Unusually high spotted wing drosophila pressure. Vegetable and Fruit News. Volume 14, Issue 6. <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/unusually-high-spotted-wing-drosophila-pressure/>