

# Manitoba Insect and Disease Update

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To report observations on insects or plant pathogens that may be of interest or importance to Farmers and agronomists in Manitoba, please send messages to the above contact address.

To be placed on an E-mail list so you will be notified immediately when new Manitoba Insect Updates are posted, please contact John Gavloski at the address or numbers listed above.

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August 10, 2012

## Recent Insect and Plant Pathogen Activity

### Canola

**Flea Beetles on podded canola:** The flea beetles that we commonly see in canola have only one generation per year, yet we see the adults at two distinct times; in the spring when the adult beetles feed on crucifer seedlings, and in late-summer when the adults will feed on mature canola plants and other crucifers. The adults present in late-summer are the adults that overwinter, and will be the same adults you see next spring. This is why you see the adults twice, even though they have only 1 generation per year.

The late-summer flea beetles are becoming more noticeable in many canola fields. Some have been enquiring whether such populations can be economical. No specific economic thresholds are available for fall populations of flea beetles in canola, although research on this has been done at AAFC in Saskatoon. The researchers concluded that except in situations where there are extremely high populations (100's per plant on average) feeding on plants in the very early podding stages, these populations are not likely to be economical. The biggest concern with the feeding on plants in the early-podding stage is potential increases in pod shattering and loss of seed.

Spraying for flea beetles in the fall for the purpose of reducing the risk the following spring is not recommended. Flea beetles are mobile enough that you could still have problems in the spring, as they move in from neighboring areas. In addition, there can be big differences between fall and spring populations. So while noting where flea beetle populations are high in the fall can help make decisions regarding seed treatments the next spring, a strong correlation between fall and spring populations has never been established.

A reminder that if applying insecticide for any insect in canola, the shortest preharvest intervals are 7 days to swathing or direct-combining. **Once a canola crop is within 7 days of swathing, insecticides cannot be applied for any insect.**

**Diseased bertha armyworms wanted:** There have been several reports of substantial numbers of bertha armyworm being found dead on the upper parts of plants in some areas. This could be caused by a virus or a fungus, and some populations may have both pathogens at noticeable levels

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A reminder that an entomologist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon is looking for samples from diseased populations of bertha armyworms. If interested and able to collect some diseased bertha armyworms, larvae can be placed in any type of tube or vial. Samples can be sent to:

Doug Baldwin  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
107 Science Place  
Saskatoon, SK S7N 0X2  
Telephone | Téléphone (306) 956-7267  
[Doug.Baldwin@agr.gc.ca](mailto:Doug.Baldwin@agr.gc.ca)

If you are unable to collect any larvae, and you send me the location of the field we may be able to get some collected.

### Pulse Crops

**Spider mites on soybeans:** Spider mite populations are often higher when conditions have been hot and dry for a sustained period of time, but populations can change substantially after heavy rains. So if you are noticing what appears to be feeding from spider mites on soybean plants, make sure to look for the mites and see what the current population is like. Spider mites are small (about 0.4 mm), so tapping the leaves over something that the mites can easily be seen on may help in determining their presence and levels.

### Surveys and Forecasts

**Grasshopper Survey:** Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have for many years surveyed grasshopper populations in August to predict the regional risk from grasshoppers the following year. The data is mapped, and this forecast is used by farmers, agronomists, and agricultural retailers to plan for the following season.

A reminder to farm production advisors and those involved in this survey, that counts are done during August, when the majority of grasshoppers are in the adult stage. Agronomists and farmers who would also be interested in estimating grasshopper numbers in the fields they are in and have this information included in the survey are encouraged to see the survey protocol for more details of the survey and where to send data. Estimates of grasshopper levels can be collected during regular farm visits. The grasshopper survey protocol is located at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/fad95s00.html>

### Insect Identification Quiz

You notice a lot of these bright green grasshoppers with long antennae in the vegetation around the edge of the field. What are they, and are these a concern in field crops?



**Answer:** This is a katydid. They do not cause economic damage to crops. They belong to a family of grasshoppers known as the long-horned grasshoppers (Tettigoniidae). The species of grasshoppers that potentially can be pests of crops in the Canadian prairies belong to a family of grasshoppers known as short-horned grasshoppers (Acrididae). Male katydids are good songsters. The sword-shaped thing at the back of this katydid is the ovipositor (egg-layer). Only the females will have these.