

Potato Leafhopper

Empoasca fabae (Harris) (Homoptera: Cicadellidae)

(Origin: Native)



Potato Leafhopper Nymph and Adult

Primary Host: Many vegetable crops.

Damage: Characteristic wedge-shaped yellow area at leaf tip (“hopperburn”). Damage may spread over many entire leaves. Stunted plants and reduced yields may result.

Management: Monitor by net sweeping beginning in early June.

Biocontrols: Several predators, parasites and fungal pathogens attack Potato Leafhoppers.

Cultural Controls: Vigorously growing plants more easily withstand feeding damage. Crops near alfalfa fields tend to suffer more damage especially after the alfalfa is cut.

Physical Controls: Floating row covers can keep Potato Leafhoppers off plants.

Chemical Controls: Contact your local Penn State County Extension Agent for more information. <http://www.extension.psu.edu/extmap.html>

Insect Description:

Adults: Tiny (about 1/8” long); wedge-shaped, yellow-green insects which fly, jump or run sideways when disturbed. Wings are held roof-like over the body.

Nymph: Smaller versions of the adults, but wingless, and walk sideways.

Eggs: Laid singly within the petioles and veins on undersurfaces of host plants. Hatch in about 10 days.

Life History: Does not overwinter in Pennsylvania. Adults are blown up from the south in late May and early June. Once they arrive, females deposit 1-6 eggs daily in plant stems. The total period from egg to reproductive maturity is about 28 days under favorable conditions. There can be several overlapping generations during the growing season. Both nymphs and adults inject saliva into plants as they feed. They can remain active until killed by fall frosts.



Potato Leafhopper size