

Chili - Fruit Fly

Recognize the problem

Fruit fly females lay eggs under the epidermis of the fruit. An infested fruit usually has a small dimple where the female fly has deposited an egg. After emerging from their eggs, maggots generally move to the core to feed, but they may also feed on the walls of the fruit. As the maggot matures inside the fruit, the fruits turn red prematurely, becoming soft and rotten. Soft spots can often be seen where the maggot has fed on the fruit. When infested fruit is picked, the cap usually separates from the fruit because the maggot has eaten the core. Fruit may drop from the plant.

Background

Maggots remain in peppers until fully grown (2 to 3 weeks). At this time, the maggot exits the pepper and drops to the soil to pupate. Yield losses can be considerable. One maggot can destroy an entire fruit.

Management

- Plough and harrow before planting. This exposes pupae in the soil to natural enemies and desiccation
- Monitor the crop for fruit flies so that measures can be taken as soon as they arrive in the crop
- Collect and destroy damaged fruit then bury them at least 15cm deep in the soil
- Use protein bait and insecticide (e.g. malathion) mixed in the bait to trap and kill the fruit fly

Fruit fly adult. (Photo by A. M. Varela, icipe)



Adult fruit fly. (Photo by CABI)



When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Bactrocera latifrons*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Cambodia



Authors: General Directorate of Agriculture (GDA)
No. 54B/49F, St. 395-656, Sangkat Teuk La Ak, Khan Toul Kork, Phnom Penh
tel: +855 23 631 9 070

Edited by Plantwise.