

Agricultural Beet

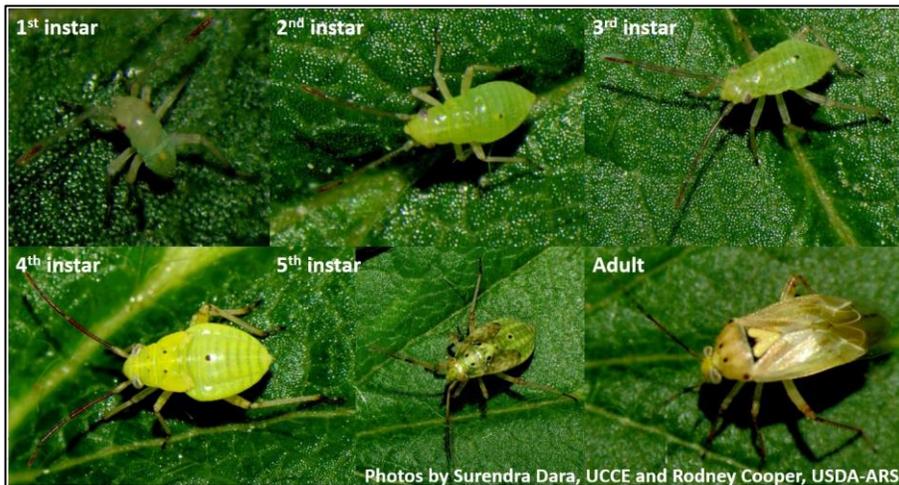
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Control Options for Insect Pests in Sugar Beets

Cutworm: An occasional insect pest of sugar beets in the SMBSC growing area. Cutworm feeding can involve clipping leaves off or the cutting of the entire plant near the soil surface. There are several types of cutworms that can overwinter in Minnesota, but the black cutworm migrates to Minnesota each season on southerly winds. The University of Minnesota coordinates a black cutworm reporting network. This can be accessed with the following link: <https://swroc.cfans.umn.edu/agricultural-programs/pest-management/black-cutworm-reporting-network>.



Lygus Bug: Generally, migrate into sugar beet fields from adjacent alfalfa fields that have been cut or from edible bean fields after dry down. Adults and nymphs damage sugar beet plants by feeding on new leaves with piercing-sucking mouthparts. Females further damage plants by laying eggs into the petioles. Yield is impacted mostly due to late-season development of new leaves in response to feeding injury.



Leaf tip yellowing following feeding of Lygus Bug.

Feeding damage on petiole from Lygus Bug.



Thresholds and Recommendations

Cutworm: The economic threshold depends on the sugar beet population in your field and the amount of feeding/cutworms that are present. Published thresholds mention 4-5% cutting being the threshold for treatment, but this is likely too high in fields with lower than desired stands.

Lygus Bug: If over one-third of plants are infested with even one lygus bug, chemical control may be justified to prevent economic damage from occurring. However, an insecticide application within 3 weeks of harvest is likely not going to be economically beneficial.

Treatment decisions should be made on a field-by-field basis. For assistance with treatment decisions, contact your Agriculturist.

Insecticide Options

Chlorpyrifos (Lorsban or generic) is no longer labeled for use to control insect pests in sugar beets, even if you have product in your possession, you cannot use it. There are only a few remaining options to control cutworm and lygus bugs. There are other products that are labeled for use in sugar beet but may not list lygus bug as a target pest. Always consult the product label for specifics on application rates and timing. The table below is simply a guideline.

Product	Rate	Insect Pest	PHI
Dibrom 8 Emulsive	1 pint/acre	Lygus Bug	2 Days
Asana XL	5.8-9.6 oz./acre	Cutworm (has activity against lygus bug at the high rate but not specifically listed on the label)	21 Days
Mustang Maxx	2.24-4.0 oz./acre	Lygus Bug and Cutworm	50 Days

Always consult the product label for specifics on application rates and timing.

“Applying an insecticide to sugar beets is legal when it is labeled for use in the crop; however, if the specific target pest is not listed for sugar beets, effective control is not implied by the manufacturer, and growers who choose to use the product assume all liability for any unsatisfactory performance.” *2022 Sugarbeet Production Guide*



Agricultural Department
Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar
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