

Predators: Big-Eyed Bugs



See also: <http://www.potatoes.com/research.cfm>



There are two major types of big-eyed bugs in potatoes. The lighter type on the left is far more common than the black one.

Young big-eyed bugs look a lot like adults, but don't have wings.



"Drinking" from the leaf tissues.

Big-eyed bugs sometimes feed on plants when prey is scarce. This allows them to stay in a field until more prey is present.

Here's the aphid's head.

Big-eyed bugs are small, a little bigger than aphids. These big-eyed bugs shared an aphid, sucking out the fluids.

Big-eyed bug biology

1. Big-eyed bugs are present throughout the Columbia Basin, and are common in or near most potato fields.
2. Adult big-eyed bugs are present in early spring and colonize potato fields early.
3. They are sensitive to many insecticides -- care must be taken to preserve them.
4. Big-eyed bugs are generalist predators, feeding on almost any insect small enough for them to catch, but they are a major predator of aphids in potatoes.

Washington State Potato Commission (Phone: 509-765-8845)

Predators: Damsel Bugs



See also: <http://www.potatoes.com/research.cfm>



Adult damsel bug feeding on an adult *Lygus* bug.

Damsel bugs are generalist predators, feeding on many of the pest insects in potatoes. They use their strong front legs to capture prey.



The aphid's body fluids are sucked through the "beak."

Immature damsel bug feeding on an aphid.

Damsel bugs are larger than big-eyed bugs. Both are very active and hard to spot among the leaves.

Damsel bug biology

1. Damsel bugs are common nearly everywhere potatoes are grown in Washington.
2. Adult damsel bugs colonize potato fields in later spring, and nymphs can be found during the summer months.
3. In addition to aphids and *Lygus*, damsel bugs will feed on caterpillars like loopers and armyworms, and the eggs and young larvae of Colorado potato beetle.
4. Like all beneficial insects in potatoes, damsel bugs are very sensitive to broad-spectrum insecticides like pyrethroids, organophosphates, and carbamates.

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