



Potato Progress

Research and Extension for Washington's Potato Industry

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Further Notes on Tuber Moth

Andrew Jensen, WSPC and Phil Hamm, OSU Hermiston

Some of you have heard or read about the tuber moth situation that is developing in the Columbia Basin of Oregon and Washington. Please see the last issue of *Potato Progress* for more information. A few more notes are clearly pertinent –

1. Some of you are using pheromone traps to detect any tuber moths that may be in or near your fields. This is absolutely the right thing to be doing. You should know, however, that one trap in a 120 acre circle may not be adequate. These moths do not fly very far under normal circumstances, and even when motivated by a sex pheromone, they may not fly the ½ mile from one side of a circle to the other. At least four pheromone traps should be used per field to have a good chance of catching any infestation on the field margins.
2. Bearing in mind the above, the tuber moth numbers we are reporting from our regional trapping network should not be relied upon to know whether tuber moths are in your field. We feel confident that tuber moth hot spots could exist somewhere in the Basin that we have not detected with our traps. We have one tuber moth trap per ~25 square miles of irrigated ground in Washington. Clearly this cannot be enough to detect all tuber moth outbreaks.
3. Thirdly, we had hoped that the pheromone lures for tuber moth would attract only that species. This is clearly not the case. We are routinely seeing three other moths in some numbers in the pheromone traps. One of these is very small and sometimes appears by the hundreds, especially near sagebrush and rabbit brush scrub land. Others are different colors than tuber moth but about the same size. We recommend that when you are trapping your first moths, you have the species identified by one of us.
4. Fourth, for those of you not yet using your own pheromone traps, here is information about the traps. Traps (but not holders) can be obtained two different ways, either through the local chemical dealerships or from one of the companies that supply the dealerships. Suterra, out of Bend OR, only deals with dealerships, so contact your local chemical supplier for their products. Another company, Trece Inc, will sell to both dealerships and private individuals. They can be reached by calling 918-785-3061 or going to their web site: WWW.TRECE.COM. Traps should be hung no higher than 12" above the canopy of whatever is growing in the area, or 12" off the bare ground. We are keeping the area around our traps free of weeds. The insect will likely fly no higher than the canopy height in that area. We have used the high strength PVC pipe for stands in our locations and have used heavy aluminum wire 30" long in the shape of a "7", placing one end of the wire into the end of the pipe and hanging the trap on the other end of the

wire. We have made a circle in the wire to hang the Delta trap on to help keep the trap from blowing away. In some locations we used ½” electrical conduit because the ground was so hard that pounding in the PVC pipe did not work well. The pipe is pounded into the ground about 12”.

5. Finally, we urge growers and consultants to contact one of us with suspected tuber moth damage. We know the pest is wide-spread in the Hermiston area of Oregon, but we should keep close tabs on it as it establishes itself throughout the region. Having finds reported will help us understand the spread of this pest through the area.

Please contact one of us with questions about the tuber moth. Andy Jensen – 509-765-3680; Phil Hamm – 541-567-8321.

WSU Puyallup Plant & Insect Diagnostic Laboratory

The Washington State University Puyallup Plant & Insect Diagnostic Laboratory is committed to helping the citizens of Washington State resolve their troubles with plants and insects through accurate problem diagnoses. We also provide applicable management options to a numerous state clientele such as commercial growers, pest control operators, home gardeners, consultants, county agents, Master Gardeners, and research personnel. The laboratory is currently equipped to handle samples from Washington State and we specialize in crops of Western Washington. Continue to talk with your representatives and administrators from WSU about the need for university diagnostic services and extension personnel specialized to serve growers and their crops in Eastern Washington.

For information on the laboratory, diagnostic fees, and how to submit samples, please see our website: <http://puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/>

For more specific information, the plant diagnostician Jenny Glass directly at 253-445-4582 or glass@puyallup.wsu.edu.

WSU Vegetable Pathology Team Website & Newsletter

Check out our website at http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/path_team/vegpath_team.htm for more information about the WSU Vegetable Team that is working to study vegetable problems, organize research and extension units, and help with diagnosis of plant samples.

2005 Meeting of the Western Washington Horticultural Association

Mark your Calendar-- Information will be coming soon about the 2005 annual meeting of the Western Washington Horticulture Association. See <http://wwha.wsu.edu/> for details.