



The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB) *A dangerous new pest to agricultural crop production*

A new invasive pest is spreading rapidly across the United States – the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug *Halyomorpha halys* (BMSB). It is a known pest of fruit trees and legumes in its native China, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. Entomologists suggest that the adults might have entered the United States as stowaways in packing crates from Asia. BMSB is polyphagous (it feeds on many kinds of plants), with a long list of host plants including many fruit and shade trees and other woody ornamentals as well as legumes and various vegetables. In Asia, it has been reported as a significant pest of fruit trees, vegetable crops and corn and soybeans.

Explosive growth and impact on orchards

The BMSM has caused extensive damage to orchard and farm crops in the Mid Atlantic region in 2010. Orchards in the areas where the pest was in great numbers experienced losses of 50 – 100 percent of their apple crop. The USDA has deemed the BMSB a serious – and potentially disastrous - pest

- The pest has a very wide variety of plants on which it feeds, from apples and pears, to virtually all stone fruit, vegetables (especially peppers and tomatoes), field and sweet corn, and soybeans – and probably many more.
- The usual pesticides employed in IPM programs have little effect on the BMSB.
- Unlike other species of stink bugs, the BMSB feeds destructively in all five growth instars – from the tiniest nymphs to the adult stage – and has the potential to cause damage in the mid Atlantic area from April to October.
- Extension specialists from PA and MD have estimated that the PA and MD apple crops would be reduced by a minimum of 10% this year just by BMSB damage.
- At this point, researchers have no real – even stopgap – recommendations to growers for next year on methods to control the pest.
- The potential for harm caused by the BMSB is of serious concern given that the current situation has occurred so fast – the pest is estimated to have been brought to the Allentown, PA area around 1998, was first observed in orchards around 2003-04, and has exploded to the current level of infestation in the short time since then.

USApple has been working closely with USDA officials including the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Congress and the agricultural community. Central to the research effort is the Appalachian Fruit Research Station (AFRS) at Kearneysville, WV, where scientists have been working on the BMSB for the past several years and thus have the greatest knowledge of the pest. ARS has added three senior scientist positions to the Kearneysville research site, and additional funding is necessary for cooperative work with Extension researchers and state universities. A near term goal of the research effort is to develop recommendations for growers to use to control the BMSB next season, with the longer term objective of identifying and developing biological control methods.



Interior damage caused to Honeycrisp by BMSB nymph feeding



Photo from orchard showing damage to Pink Lady by BMSB adult and nymph feeding

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