

Indiana Gourd Society

Cucurbit Insect Management

Purdue Dept of Entomology Bulletin E-30, "Vegetable Insects" is a good source of information if you have insect problems in your gourds. Single copies can be obtained from your local extension office.

The striped cucumber overwinters in Indiana and is the 1st concern we generally face each spring with seedlings. The spotted beetle is the "Western Corn rootworm" pest noted in June to August. Both of these beetles transmit "Bacterial Wilt". This is the case of the sudden, severe, and permanent wilt of a single plant runner or the entire plant. Squash bugs are brownish-black, about 5/8ths of an inch long. We see them largely on the gourd fruit later in the season in large numbers. These bugs love butternut squash and will move from squash to gourds easily.

Sevin is recommended for Beetle control. "Ambush/Pounce" or Asana is suggested for squash bug control. There is no cure known for "Bacterial Wilt". Control of the insects is needed to control the wilt.

FOR THE GROWING SEASON

By Ron Bair

What about those pesky pests – Cucumber beetles (spotted & striped), Squash vine borer, and Squash bugs.

For the Organic Grower - I have read that Sabadilla Dust or Spray works very well to get rid of Cucumber beetles and Adult Squash bugs. For the Squash bug nymph and Squash vine borer, 5% Rotenone Dust or Spray is supposed to be very effective.

For the Non-Organic Grower - Sevin Dust or Spray works well to get rid of Cucumber beetles and Squash bugs.

All three of these Dusts or Sprays have a wide variety of uses for other vegetables, ornamentals, shrubs, and vines. Be sure to READ THE LABEL. Sprays seem to be more economical. NOTE - When applying any of these dusts or sprays, try to apply at dusk after the bees have left and gone home for the evening. Try to apply before the dew sets in, so that it will have time to dry. Do not apply dusts or sprays when the vegetation is wet. Sevin spray is known to cause a whitish discolor to the leaves. This doesn't seem to harm. Some types of moths visit in the evening and help in pollination.

One method I have used to kill the Squash vine borer, is to cover the vine where the borer appears to be. Cover the vine with good loose soil on top of the damaged area, and pat it down firmly, making a 6" to 8" mound of soil. This will usually smother the borer. Keep watered well. The vine will normally take new roots and continue to grow.

For those growing on a trellis, this is impossible. For these vines, a J-Hook can be made from small wire. Slide the J-Hook up inside the vine and extract the borer. Keep this portion of the vine watered down from time to time over the next couple days. The presence of the borer can be noted by a secreted pile of sawdust looking material near their hole. There are also methods of injection to get rid of the borer.

The Cucumber beetle thrives on the blooms. It will also eat on the gourds. They are beneficial at the same time though. They do an extremely large amount of pollination. In some cases, they may be the