

June 13, 2020

**Pest Alerts...** **Onion thrips** now active in RI, including nymphs, which are the same long shape as adults, but the color of an Orange Creamsicle– check plants by gently pulling apart (not completely!) youngest and second-youngest leaves– avoid letting these get out of hand; **leaf miners** in beets and chard continue, locally; **Cercospora leaf spot** is also appearing on beets; **Brassica flea beetles**, **Imported Cabbage Worm**, and **Diamond-back Moth larvae** are all out on **Brassicas**– check for worms on youngest leaves, down in the “cup” of cabbages; **striped cucumber beetles** are now very busy out in the field... best time to apply knockdown insecticide is either just before dark as it begins to cool and beetles slow down, or just before sunrise while it is still cool and flowers are not yet open– **flowers will have bees in them in the morning so don't spray when bees are present**; Saw a **squash beetle** on a butternut squash leaf– earliest I've ever seen; there is a report of **egg-laying squash bugs** in MA– keep an eye out; **Colorado potato beetles** are out in varying degrees in various locations, with egg laying locally– pay attention to your young **potato** plants now, and especially newly transplanted **eggplants**, which should be covered to protect against them, as well as **potato flea beetles** which are definitely out there; **potato leafhoppers** were seen in Seekonk, MA, this week on **potatoes** and **snap beans**– if you can always get a few flying *when you give your plants a knock*, take a closer look– if there are lots of adults, consider treating, otherwise wait for nymphs and hit them and adults at the same time– but **DON'T** let hopper burn get out of hand!, and don't forget to check your **eggplants** for **potato leafhoppers** as well; thought I saw a bunch of **European corn borer moths** in a potato planting... didn't catch one to identify... Finally, those **black bean aphids** may find their way to your **Fava Beans** right about now (what? You don't grow Fava Beans?)- they may be also building up on tender young **lambquarters** thriving all over your manure/compost piles– if you've got the hookup and the planting isn't really big, blasting water at those aphids probably works more effectively than any insecticide – but don't try this on that extra ACRE of favas you planted.

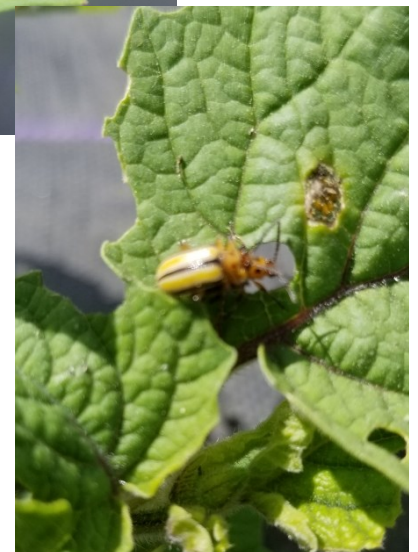
**The Latest COVID-19 Resources:** <https://web.uri.edu/coopext/coronavirus-resources/>

--> Need to discuss? Got something you need looked at? URI Extension: 401-874-2967/andy\_radin@uri.edu, hfaubert@uri.edu

### June Pest Gallery...



Left to right: potato aphids on tomato leaf (they come in green, too); nocturnal damage to a brassica seedling– probably variegated cutworm; Imported cabbage worm; three-lined potato beetle on ground cherry.



## June Pest Gallery...



Top left: Diamond-back moth pupae; top right, black cutworm working its way through one of many napa cabbages; middle left, recent beet leafminer damage on golden beets; middle right, Cercopsora leaf spot on beet; lower left, potato flea beetle damage on newly emerged potatoes; lower right, asparagus beetle larvae consuming the "leaves" of young asparagus ferns. [The "leaves" are in fact needle-like cladodes (modified stems) in the axils of scale leaves.]



## New Feature: *STAR FARMER*

Southern New England has ever more small-scale, diversified, and innovative farms. And many more who have been at it for decades, if not generations. We can all learn from each other—growers spend all day long solving problems with on-the-spot creativity and ingenuity. And we can also celebrate each other's successes.

And if "Star Farmer" sounds familiar to some, yes, it's a direct rip-off from The Great British Bake-off. And all the other bakers clap in appreciation for the Star Baker. So give a round of applause for the Star Farmers portrayed in the coming weeks.

### Report from Middletown

Once again, thanks to Jim and Michelle Garman!

Growing conditions are pretty good over here, with soil temperature finally in the mid-60s; days are warm but not brutal, and nights still relatively cool. Still, 200 feet of Napa cabbage transplanted in late April bolted in spectacular fashion on June 6th. Lots of leaves for making our own kimchi, but that's about it. Spring brassicas are always a roll of the dice in this climate; direct-seeded ones seem to do better than transplants, but that is purely anecdotal observation on our part. [Editor's Note: Without question, transplanted Brassica rapa (Bok Choi, Napa Cabbage, Rapini, Turnip) is much more bolt-risky than direct-seeded crops; root disturbance and pot-bound-ness create enough stress to cause earlier-than-desired flowering. Cold nights, too- it was 29 on April 29th at URI, and there were snow squalls on May 9.]

Pests: what an interesting year, to say the least. Flea beetle pressure, heavy at first, is now more up and down. Leafminer has been almost non-existent, and no sign yet of leafhopper or Colorado potato beetle (we know, they are both imminent). Aphids, though, that's another story. On Wednesday 10 June we cultivated our favas and saw nothing. The next day they were covered with black bean aphids, with spillover into nearby rows of peas and amaranth. Favas seem to get aphids about every other year, and we've found that a heavy infestation can really reduce yield. [Editor's Note: Black Bean Aphids have been sighted at many locations in New England this week.]

We're not ones to wait for the lady beetles to work their magic, and honestly, about a million lady beetles wouldn't have made a dent in the aphid population. Most OMRI-listed sprays with which we were familiar would have had at least potential impact on honeybees, lady beetles and

syrphid flies, so at Andy's advice, we dragged out the hose and blasted the aphids off 550 feet off plants. We will likely have to do it again in a couple of days but it seems to have knocked them back considerably.

As expected, restaurant sales remain relatively light although in fairness, we have not yet had a great diversity to offer chefs yet. Still, one small restaurant owner doing only takeout told us they were 50/50 about remaining open and therefore running extremely low inventory. These are hard times for people in the industry, and we really feel for them. Grocery sales are up, with a high demand for local produce, and we had to close our CSA registration because we were on the verge of being overwhelmed. These are strange times, and we wish you all the best as we move into summer.



Photo: Genevieve Higgins, UMass

### Your Input is Welcome

Please submit updates from your farm—a paragraph or two in an email is all it takes. Also, please submit suggestions for articles, meeting topics, and research needs from us at URI.