

Insect Alert

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BROAD MITES

I have received a report of heavy BROAD MITE populations in an un-named crop today. While this does not necessarily justify the expense of a broad mite acaricide application across all the pepper and eggplant acreage, it does suggest some very close checking in the next few days. The current weather is great for broad mites. Unlike spider mites, broad mites like cool, wet weather.

In pepper, check the terminal growth. Look for misshapen leaves and bronzing (resembles virus symptoms). Then, to verify it is broad mites, check the terminals under a microscope and look for the eggs (clear eggs with white “speckles”).

In eggplant, the terminal growth is too hairy for anything. Look at about the third to fourth leaf down from the terminal and also under the calyx of fruit. Again, find the eggs to verify that you have broad mites.

Little brown moths with white markings

I have had two reports of lots of little brown moths with white markings around vegetable fields. These moths show up every fall, and are widely distributed. This moth is the Hawaiian Beet Webworm. While this pest is capable of feeding on a variety of vegetables, the only crop I have seen this pest develop large populations on in our area is spinach. It is a serious pest of spinach. It is a webworm and ties leaves together and feeds within this protected habitat; thus, it is not easy to control. You can also usually find larvae on pigweed.