



## *Vegetables*

# Colorado Potato Beetle

Pest Fact Sheet **16**

### **Introduction**

The Colorado potato beetle became a pest when settlers brought potatoes into the Rocky Mountain area, the native habitat of this beetle. The beetle preferred the potato to its host weed, and now is a serious pest throughout the U.S. and Eastern Canada.

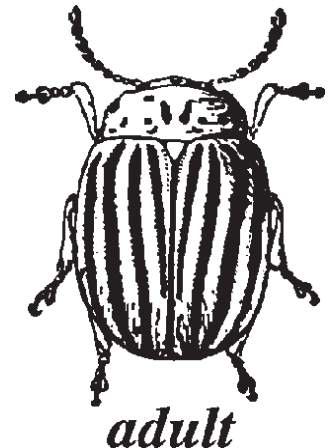
The Colorado potato beetle feeds on the leaves and terminal growth of such plants as potato, tomato, and eggplant. The potato, however, is the preferred plant. The above ground destruction of the plant can cause severe reduction in yield and tuber size.

### **Description**

The larvae of the Colorado potato beetle are up to 1/2" long, hump-backed and shaped like a semi-circle. They are a shiny reddish-bronze color with two rows of black spots on each side of the body.

The adult is a distinctive yellow and black striped beetle. Ten black stripes run along the length of the wing covers. The beetles are convex, about 3/8" long and 1/4" wide.

The spindle-shaped orange-yellow eggs can be found in groups, usually on the underside of leaves.



### **Life cycle**

The Colorado potato beetle overwinters as an adult in the soil. It emerges early in the spring and mates. The female lays eggs on the undersides of the host leaves in batches of approximately 24 (about 500 in all) over a 4-5 week period. The eggs hatch within 4-9 days and the larvae begin to feed immediately. They go through 4 molting stages in 2-3 weeks. They then enter into the soil, form a spherical cell and pupate. The new adults emerge in 5-10 days and the life cycle is repeated through a second generation.

### **Control**

Since this insect can rapidly become resistant to pesticides, it is important to incorporate non-chemical measures in your management program. They could include handpicking, crop rotation and spunbonded row covers. Organic growers, please remember that there are several pesticides whose active ingredient is a biological agent, not an artificial chemical. Consult your county Extension Educator (see county office telephone listing on reverse side) for specific pesticide recommendations.

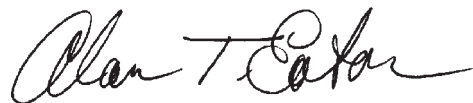
## Summary

Damaging stage	Larva and adult
Part of plant attacked	Leaves and terminal growth
Overwintering stage	Adult
Number of generations per year	2
Time of year when damage is done	June, July, August
Number of applicants per year	1 - 3, depending upon the extent of infestation

### UNH Cooperative Extension County Office Telephone Numbers

<b>Belknap</b> (603) 527-5475	<b>Carroll</b> (603) 539-3331	<b>Cheshire</b> (603) 352-4550	<b>Coos</b> (603) 788-4961	<b>Grafton</b> (603) 787-6944
<b>Hillsborough</b> Goffstown (603) 641-6060	<b>Merrimack</b> (603) 796-2151	<b>Rockingham</b> Brentwood, NH 03833 (603) 679-5616	<b>Strafford</b> (603) 749-4445	<b>Sullivan</b> (603) 863-9200

***Stop!** It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. If unsure of registration status of a particular pesticide product, contact the NH Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550. Store pesticides in their original containers in a locked cabinet or shed away from food. Dispose of unused pesticides or empty containers safely, according to NH regulations. If you suspect pesticide poisoning, call the New Hampshire Poison Control Center at 1-800-562-8236.*



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