



Whiteflies



Afghanistan Agricultural Extension Project

What are whiteflies?

Whiteflies (*Bemisia tabaci*, *Trialeurodes vaporariorum*) are common pests of tomatoes, cucumber, beans, cabbage, peppers, squash, and potatoes. Whiteflies are small, soft-bodied sucking insects. Adults are about 1.5 mm long, with yellow bodies and white wings. Newly emerged nymphs have legs and antennae and are mobile. Older nymphal stages are oval-shaped, somewhat translucent to whitish-yellow in color, lack legs and antennae, and remain fixed on the leaf surface. The last nymphal stage (pupa) has red eyespots and, depending on the species, may have waxy filaments around the edge of the pupa.

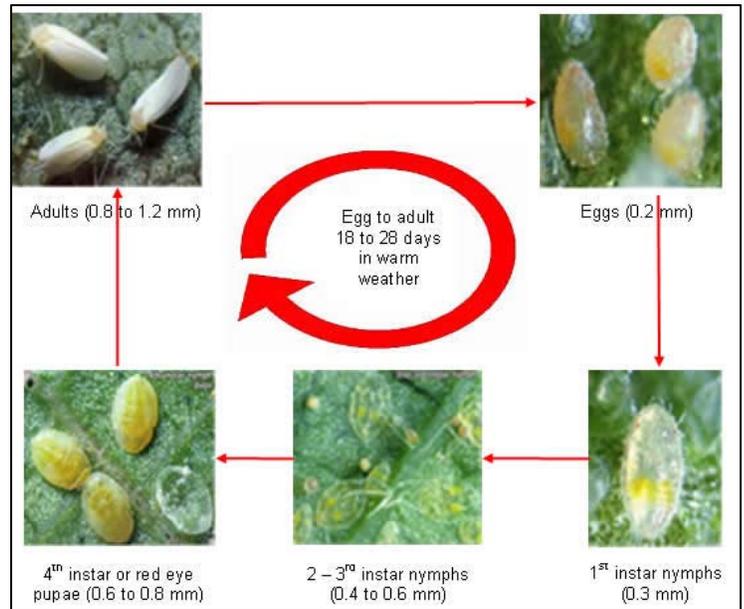


Figure 1. Life cycle of whiteflies

Damage.

Whiteflies reduce yields by feeding on the undersides of leaves, removing nutrients from the foliage resulting in poor plant growth. Infestations may cause fruit to ripen unevenly, particularly with *Bemisia* in tomatoes. Whiteflies produce a sticky substance (honeydew) in large quantities that can tarnish fruit. Black sooty molds may grow on the honeydew. Whiteflies transmit plant viruses and it is important to have basic knowledge of the lifecycle and stages of development.

Detection.

1. Identify the stages of the insect by using hand lens
2. Use sticky cards to identify white fly populations
3. Whiteflies are generally is under the leaf. Female lays eggs in a semicircle
4. Scouting the hoop house on a weekly basis is extremely important
5. Sticky cards help determine the overall stage and size of the whitefly population

Control.

- 0 to 5 adults per sticky card- monitor closely
- 6 to 20 adults per sticky card- population growing
- 21 and above per sticky card- use spray program or introduce biological control: natural enemies, including parasitoid wasps and lady beetles, help reduce whitefly populations.

For more information visit: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/>

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Reference: <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/r116301211.html#DAMAGE>

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