

# FACT SHEET

## Colorado Potato Beetle



### What is it?

Colorado potato beetle (CPB; *Leptinotarsa decemlineata* Say, 1824) is globally considered to be one of the most economically damaging pests to the potato industry and is one of Australia's most unwanted exotic pests.

### What does it look like?



Image credit: David Cappaert, Bugwood.org

#### Adults

- 8.5 - 11.5mm long
- Orange-yellow body colour
- Characteristic yellow-white wings with 5 black stripes



#### Eggs

- Laid in clusters of 12-25 eggs, on the bottom of leaves
- About 1.2mm in size, elongated oval shape
- Yellow or pale-orange colour

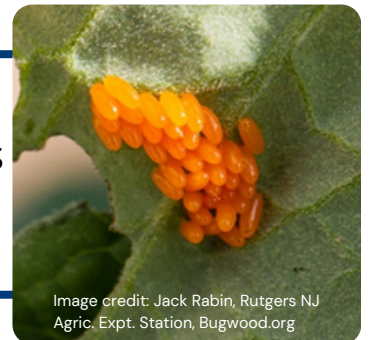


Image credit: Jack Rabin, Rutgers NJ Agric. Expt. Station, Bugwood.org



Image credit: David Cappaert, Bugwood.org

#### Larvae

- Full-grown larvae are about 15mm long with a humpbacked shape
- They start as brick-red and mature to salmon-pink, with a double row of dark spots



#### Pupae

- Pupal moult occurs a few cm deep into the soil
- Adult beetle emerges after 8-18 days, depending on temperature



Image credit: Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

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 Plant Health  
AUSTRALIA

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### Hosts

Solanaceae (nightshade) plants:



Potato



Eggplant



Tomato



Capsicum



Nightshade weeds,  
such as Buffalo Burr

### Damage

- Severe defoliation through leaf chewing
- Larvae consume up to 40cm<sup>2</sup> of leaf surface
- Adult beetles consume up to 10cm<sup>2</sup> of leaf daily
- Yield losses of 20-100%
- CPB can act as a vector for several pathogens



Image credit: Shutterstock

### How will it get here?

The beetle is most likely to 'hitchhike' its way on cargo, imported produce, or farm equipment.

- Many Australian potato growing regions have a suitable climate for the pest to establish
- The beetle is capable of short flights and will spread quickly

### Insecticide Resistance

Overseas, the beetle is known as a 'superpest' due to its rapidly evolving resistance against many insecticides. Resistance may develop within 4 to 10 generations. Beetles possibly carry pre-existing resistances upon incursion. Always refer to the APVMA website for current advice.

### What can I do?



**Inspect** your plants or planting material prior to planting

**Monitor** for suspicious insects or damage



**Report** anything unusual. Early detection is key!

Contact the AUSVEG team with any questions or feedback: [science@ausveg.com.au](mailto:science@ausveg.com.au) or 03 9882 0277

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