

## Delaware State University Cooperative Extension

# FOUR LEAST WANTED INSECTS!

This is the list of the top four insects that affect Pole Lima beans in Kent County, Delaware. These bugs can do some serious damage to your plot. They can cause you to lose most, if not all, of your lima bean yield if left uncontrolled.



(young aphids)

### Aphids (*Aphid gossypii*)

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#### Description in stages:

**Eggs** One type lays eggs while the other has a live birth. The aphid that is a problem in Delaware is winged and lays eggs. The eggs are small and are transparent in color on the bottom of the bean leaf. They become adults in seven days.

**Adults** They are typically green, black, brown, or white. They are pear shaped and usually 1/16 inch long. Most of them have a pair of transparent wings and slender antennae. The whole life cycle of an adult is about a month. They can lay three to six eggs in one day.

**Size and Shape** They are 1/32 inch and are oblong in shape.

**Remarks** Aphids damage the plant by sucking on the plant to feed on the sap. They are dangerous because they can carry plant pathogens. They can also make the flowers or the fruit become malformed. The plants will look wilted or often turn yellow. The look of the leaves and stems can be distorted in appearance after an attack. Since these insects reproduce so rapidly, they can quickly become out of control.



(adult aphid)

### Green Stink Bug (*Acrosternum hilare*) (say)

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#### Description in stages:

**Eggs** The eggs are barrel shaped and usually found 30-40 in a bunch laid on the underside of leaves.

**Nymph** *Younger-* They are usually dark with red or orange markings.

*Older-* They are green with orange markings at the edge of the thorax and abdomen and some black spots around the edges.

**Adults** The adults have bright green bodies with yellow, orange and black markings along the lateral edge of the abdomen, and some yellow around the head.

**Size and Shape** 1/2 to 3/4 inches long and the general shape is shield like

**Remarks** These pests are the most damaging insect to pole lima beans. They puncture the fruit with their beaks and feed on the flesh of the fruit. When they penetrate the bean pod they can transmit the yeast spot disease organism. They can really cause a lot of damage in a short period of time. Many materials will kill them on contact; however providing control of new migrants may prove difficult.



Nymph



Adult



Damaged  
bean seed





(eggs)

## Mexican Bean Beetles (*Epilachna varivesties Mulsant*)

### Description in stages:

**Eggs** They are oblong shaped yellow eggs in bunches of about 40 perched on the underside of the plant leaves.

**Larvae** Bright yellow spiny oval larvae that continue to feed and molt while in this stage

**Adults** Coppery brown beetle with 16 black spots in a row on its back (Similar to a lady bug. )

**Shape and size** ½ inch or the general size of a lady bug.

**Remarks** These are some very intruding insects mostly because the adults and the larvae feed on the beans and foliage. The most damage is done when they attack the young pods and stems. They can really take a toll on lima bean foliage, when they are finished only the vines are remaining and the leaves look like lace. The MBB eggs can hatch very rapidly from 5-24 day if the temperature is right. They can be out of control in a matter of days. A very popular way to control them biologically is with the spined soldier bug.



(adult and larva)



(damaged leaves )



adult spider mite

## Spider Mites (*Tetranychus urticae Koch*)

### Description in stages:

**Eggs** They are laid on the plant host and they hatch in about three days. They look like little microscopic pearls. They are laid on the underside of the plant leaf.

**Larvae** The eggs are then larvae with round bodies and three pair of legs. They molt and develop into nymphs the next day.

**Nymph** There are two nymph stages that only last about two days. In the days the abdomens become pointed and they grow another pair of legs.

**Adults** The adult stage only lasts for a few days and it does the most damage to the plant foliage.

**Size and Shape** They look like a small spider. They cannot be seen with the naked eye. A magnifying lens must be used to identify.

**Remarks** Spider mites existence on pole beans is evident by tiny yellow or white speckles on the leaf as well as spider webs. They attack the lower and mature leaves on the bottom of the plant first. Spider mites puncture tiny holes in the leaf of the plant. They suck out the plant content or mesophyll. Once the plant inside has been eaten the leaf will lose its moisture and die. The life cycle of a spider mite is only seven to ten days. If there is a developing problem on pole lima bean it would be a good preventative measure to spray them with water every three days or to use an insecticidal soap.

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