

August 7, 2012

BMSB

A new insect pest that we may begin to see as summer temperatures finally cool down and we go into fall is Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, or BMSB. This insect is a bad pest on many different plants, but we really begin to notice them in the fall when they move into our homes in swarms to overwinter inside, with us.

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug is a native of Asia, mainly China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. This invasive insect was brought to Pennsylvania, probably on a wooden crate in 1996, and was not found until 2001 in Allentown, PA. BMSB is a stink bug, with the shield shaped body like the rest of the stink bugs. It is a mottled brown color with white lines on the antennae. It also has alternating spots of white and brown down the sides of the wings. BMSB is about 5/8 inches long. There are many other insects and other stink bugs that look very similar so if you find one you are not sure of, you should bring it into the extension office for correct identification.

BMSB is a horrible pest that feeds on a wide range of plants including vegetables, fruits, field crops, and ornamentals including trees, shrubs, and perennials. So basically nothing is safe from this insect, including our homes. Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs will swarm into our homes and on our doors and windows in the fall, just like Multicolored Asian Ladybeetles do. The fall and spring are when we may notice these pesky insects more often than we do in the summer on our plants, unless we see the damage.

Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs can cause a great deal of damage to our plants. They will insert their piercing sucking mouthparts into our fruits and vegetables and suck out the juices. Typically this will leave corky spots or it can scar the apples or tomatoes. This damage can lead to a reduction in sale ability as well as a person having to cut that part out of their produce if they are going to eat it themselves.

Another very big problem that occurs from Brown Marmorated Stink Bug is that they congregate in our homes in the winter. This insect does not hurt you at all, but large quantities of them are a nuisance to our homes and they can stink, as the name implies. There is not one good method of control for them, it is best to make sure your home is kept sealed up and to use an outdoor insect barrier spray of some sort to combat them before they become a problem. If they do get into your home, the best defense is mostly mechanical, pick them up and throw them away or into a toilet or vacuum them up. You can use some aerosol sprays in your home if necessary, be sure to follow the label on the spray bottle. If you do get a lot of BMSB in a wall void or somewhere else you cannot reach, do not spray them with an aerosol to kill them, or they will attract other insects that help to decompose dead organisms.

This insect is a new insect pest to North America and as of September 2010 it has been found in Nebraska. At this point, the distribution is not widespread in Nebraska, so if you find something you think might be Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, please bring it into the Extension Office for Identification and so we can know where they have spread to.

Nicole Stoner, Extension Educator

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Gage County • 1115 West Scott Street, Beatrice NE 68310

P: 402-223-1384 • fax: 402-223-1370 • email: nstoner2@unl.edu • website: gage.unl.edu

facebook : <http://www.facebook.com/NicoleStonerHorticulture> • twitter @Nikki_Stoner