

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

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The brown marmorated stink bug is a nuisance as well as a destructive pest and, like its name implies, puts off a nasty odor when crushed. This nonnative invasive pest has been in Nebraska since 2012. The damage the BMSB causes is from its needle-like mouthpart that punctures, resulting in sunken bruised areas on fruits. It feeds on a wide range of crops, including soybeans, corn, apple, pear, peach, cherry, peppers, tomato, maple, redbud and serviceberry, to name a few.

The BMSB is characterized by bands of white on dark antennae and white inverted V-shapes along the edge of their body. The insect itself is shaped like a shield and is about ½ inch long.

Like the Asian ladybug, the BMSB seeks winter shelter beneath house siding and structures that have openings that allow access. Once in walls, they can easily make their way inside the house where they become a nuisance, especially when their population numbers are high. Fortunately, they do not bite or spread diseases to humans, although in rare occasions their odor can cause an allergic reaction.

BMSB can be hard to manage, in particular as they seek overwintering sites. Spraying the foundation and siding with a home perimeter spray helps to keep the insect from gaining access inside. Indoors, utilize a shop vacuum, putting 1-2 inches of soapy water into the tank so that bugs drown. You can use a regular vacuum cleaner to clean up BMSB but be aware that their odor may transfer to the machine itself. Insecticides and foggers are not recommended to manage BMSB populations indoors. Check around windows, doors, chimneys and air conditioners for a tight fit and use silicone caulk and weather-stripping to close gaps.

To find out more about the brown marmorated stink bug and the crops it can damage, go to:
<http://www.stopbmsb.org/managing-bmsb/> .