



FOCUS: STINK BUGS



ABOUT STINK BUGS

Stink bugs are named for their ability to release a smell, similar to cilantro, in order to ward off predators. The brown marmorated stink bug is currently the most common stink bug in and around Pittsburgh. Brown marmorated stink bugs are native to Asia and first appeared in America in 1998. At around 5/8" long, the brown marmorated stink bug has a hard, shield-like shell, in shades of white and brown, with white stripes on its antennae. Adolescents look very similar but are smaller. Eggs are small orbs laid in clusters on the undersides of leaves.

DAMAGE

The stink bug damages both a plant's leaves and its fruit by sucking out juices. Damage appears as yellow or white spots, known as mottling. Stink bugs begin feeding around May-June and continue through the growing season. Prime targets include peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, sunflowers, raspberries, apples, cherries, pears, and peaches.

CONTROLS

- Place row cover over crops immediately after seeding or transplanting. Allow enough row cover to give the plants room to grow, and seal the edges with bricks or other heavy objects.
- Hand-pick and knock adolescents and adults into a cup of soapy water.
- Check for eggs on the undersides of leaves. Remove them and destroy.
- Stink bugs love sunflowers: plant sunflowers around the perimeter of your garden to serve as a trap crop. Sunflowers also attract stink bug predators (i.e. ants and ladybird beetles) that can help control populations.
- Try a commercially-available stink bug trap, which uses pheromones to lure the stink bugs.



BROWN MARMORATED STINK BUG ADULT



BABY BROWN MARMORATED STINK BUGS HATCH FROM EGGS



STINK BUG DAMAGE ON A TOMATO