

Summarized Report for July 20-24, 2009

BEET LEAFHOPPERS: In the South Basin, beet leafhopper (BLH) counts ranged 0-23 per trap and averaged (7.2). South Basin counts have been dropping off since the end of June (see the graph below). In the North Basin, BLH counts ranged 1-69 per trap and averaged (26.1). This is up from last week. In the North, the counts were highest in areas west of Moses Lake, and lowest in areas east of Warden.

Beet leafhoppers are the only known vector of BLTVA, which causes a disease commonly known as purple top. Treatment thresholds have not been established for BLH in potatoes, but we know that the risk for BLTVA infection increases as the number of BLH increase. We recommend that every grower deploy at least two yellow sticky traps around the margins of each potato field to monitor BLH. If you are finding more than 40 BLH in your traps, it may be time to get worried.

POTATO TUBERWORM MOTHS: Potato tuberworm moths (PTM) were found at three locations in the South Basin this week, with counts of 1-8 PTM/trap (14 PTM total). These numbers are still not very high, but it is the most PTM we have seen in the traps this year. Growers in the South Basin (especially near Tri-Cities and Burbank) should be paying attention to PTM populations, watching for the populations to increase, and thinking about control measures as the crop finishes up. We have not found any PTM in the North Basin.

APHIDS: *Twenty-five fields are being monitored for aphids this season. The fields are planted to Russet Burbank, Ranger, Umatilla, Alturas, or Norkotah. All are long-season crops.*

In the South Basin, aphid counts ranged 0-1.2 per plant. In the North Basin, aphid counts ranged 0-1.8 per plant. We found mostly winged green peach aphids this week; i.e. there were very few wingless. Growers throughout the Columbia Basin should be on the lookout for aphids and treat as warranted.

Green peach aphid (GPA) is the most efficient vector of potato leafroll virus (PLRV) which causes leafroll and tuber net necrosis in susceptible cultivars. Early recognition and control of GPA is the best tactic for limiting the spread of PLRV. Even a low incidence of PLRV can spread rapidly if GPA populations go unchecked. Current recommendations are to treat short-season potatoes when counts are 5 aphids/plant, and long-season storage potatoes when there is 1 aphid/plant. Higher action thresholds may be appropriate for cultivars that are less susceptible to net necrosis. It is important to keep in mind, however, that aphids spread other viruses and can cause direct injury to plants when aphid densities are high.