INSECT MONITORING REPORT
Summarized Report for June 17-23, 2010

BEET LEAFHOPPERS: Beet leafhoppers (BLH) were found in all of our Mattawa traps and most of our South Basin traps this week. The counts have been fairly low for the past several weeks, but watch for them to increase now that air temperatures are finally on the rise. Mattawa traps averaged 16.8 BLH/trap and ranged 9-28 BLH/trap. Traps in the North Basin (excluding Mattawa) averaged 2.9 BLH/trap and ranged 0-32 BLH/trap. Traps in the South Basin averaged 14.0 BLH/trap and ranged 0-57 BLH/trap.

Recommendations: Beet leafhoppers are important pests because they transmit BLTVA, a phytoplasma that causes purple top disease in potatoes. In 2002, purple top was widespread and resulted in significant yield losses in potato fields across the Columbia Basin. It continues to be a problem in some areas of the Basin every year. We recommend growers deploy at least two yellow sticky traps around the margins of each potato field to monitor BLH. Traps should be checked weekly. If the numbers build to 40-100 BLH/week, then it is probably time to worry. The risk of BLTVA infection increases as the number of BLH increase. For more information about BLH, go to ***IPM Guidelines for Insects and Mites in ID, OR, and WA Potatoes***. This publication lists several foliar insecticides that may be used to control BLH. Most of these insecticides are applied in May, June, and/or July in the Columbia Basin to target BLH and limit the spread of BLTVA.

POTATO TUBERWORM: No potato tuberworm moths were found in Washington survey traps this week. In the Columbia Basin, tuberworm trapping is most important in July or August through harvest, because this is when potato tubers become infested.

APHIDS: We found aphids in more potato fields this week (12 fields out of 34 sampled). Most of these were winged aphids just beginning to migrate into potato fields, but we are starting to see a few more wingless aphids colonizing potatoes. Aphids were found in five fields in Franklin County, four fields in Grant County, and three fields in Adams County. The average counts were all less than 1 aphid/plant.

Recommendations: Potato growers should be checking their fields regularly for aphids. Right now, aphids are most likely to be seen in fields that did not receive an insecticide treatment at planting. If your field was treated at planting, you can expect from 50 to 100 days of residual control, depending on what was applied. Fields treated with imidacloprid (Admire Pro, Gaucho), thiamethoxam (Platinum, Cruiser), or clothianidin (Belay) at planting should have reliable aphid control for 80 to 100 days after planting. Aldicarb (Temik) will provide approximately 70 to 75 days of control. Phorate (Thimet, Phorate) does not provide reliable control of aphids beyond 50 days. For more information about managing aphids in potatoes go to ***IPM Guidelines for Insects and Mites in ID, OR, and WA Potatoes***.

BENEFICIAL INSECTS: Big-eyed bugs were found in most of the fields we sampled this week. These are beneficial insects known to eat pests including aphids and the eggs and larvae of Colorado potato beetle. Big-eyed bugs are voracious predators that have been observed to eat more than twenty aphids in a day! These are good insects to have in your potato fields. Unfortunately, big-eyed bugs are very susceptible to broad-spectrum insecticides. Dr. Bill

Snyder, WSU Entomologist, and his team have observed that big-eyed bugs are six times more abundant in fields sprayed with selective pesticides (like Fulfill and Success) compared to fields treated with broad-spectrum insecticides (like Monitor).