

COLORADO POTATO BEETLES

True "potato beetles" are a serious pest of potatoes and other related plants. They are pests as both larva and adults. While potatoes are the preferred host for the Colorado potato beetle, they may feed on a number of other plants in the nightshade family such as eggplant, tomato, pepper, tobacco, ground cherry, horse-nettle, common nightshade, belladonna, thornapple, and henbane.

Colorado potato beetles spend the winter as adults, digging several inches into the soil and emerging in the spring. They feed on newly sprouted host plants and mate. Females deposit bright orange oval eggs on the underside of leaves. Eggs hatch in four to five days, and the small, reddish larvae feed almost continuously, stopping only when molting. Larvae are generally found near the top of the plant, seldom moving far from the plant on which they hatch unless all the leaves are eaten. At the end of the larval period they drop from the plants and burrow into the soil to pupate. There are one to three generations per year.



CPB LARVA

SIZE |——|
Up to ½ inch



CPB ADULT

|——|
Up to ½ inch

NOTICE: many of the pest beetles are not symmetrically shaped. Compare the perfectly round dome shape of a ladybeetle with the shape of a Colorado potato beetle.

Crop rotation is essential and effective for delaying and reducing potato beetle infestations. Fields should be several hundred yards from areas previously infested with beetles. Lady beetles, predacious stinkbugs, parasitic flies, and fungi can help reduce populations of Colorado Potato beetles. These natural enemies should be conserved by limiting applications of broad-spectrum insecticides. *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) can be sprayed on small larva but is ineffective on larger, older larva.

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