Putting the Kibosh on Squash Bugs

Annette Meyer Heisdorffer, Ph.D.
Extension Agent for Horticulture
Education – Daviess County

* On slide denotes credit and thanks to Dr.Ric Bessin, University of Kentucky Entomology Extension Specialist for pictures and information

Squash and Pumpkin Plants

Squash Bug Injury

Yellowing & wilting from squash bug

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Squash Bug Selfies

Squash Bugs on Pumpkin

Squash Bug on Squash

Life Cycle of Squash Bug

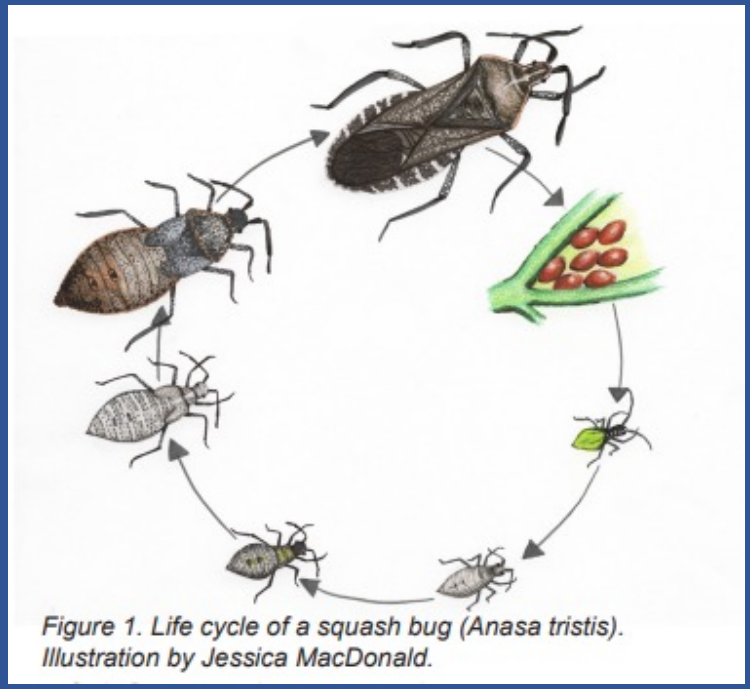

Figure 1. Life cycle of a squash bug (Anasa tristis). Illustration by Jessica MacDonald.

Squash Bug

Adult

Eggs

Nymphs and Eggs

Nymph

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Squash Bug Adult

- Piercing sucking mouth parts
- Two generations per year
- Late May to Early June
- Overwinter as adults outside the field, active in late May to Early June

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Squash Bug Eggs and Nymphs

- Bronze eggs are football shaped and lie on their sides in groups of 12 or more mainly on underside of leaves between veins
- Eggs hatch in one to two weeks
- Initial larvae have light green abdomen
- Young nymphs feed together in groups.
- Five to six weeks for nymphs to mature into adults.

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Squash Bug Nymphs

- Older nymphs are light gray in color with black legs.
- Squash bugs spend most of their time around the base and stems of the plants and on the undersides of leaves.
- Older nymphs difficult to control with insecticides
- Vector Yellow Vine Decline
- Early control very important

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A Key Pest

- Spend most of their time around:
  - Base and stems of the plants
  - On the undersides of leaves
- Tough to manage

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Squash Bug Injury

- Removes sap and cause leaves to wilt and collapse
- Young plants and infested leaves on older plants may be killed
- Vector for Yellow Vine Decline which causes yellowing, wilting, and death of plant
- Injects the bacteria that causes this disease with piercing-sucking mouthparts
- Susceptible crops: melons, watermelon, and pumpkins

Yellowing & wilting from squash bug

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Vectors of Disease

- Yellow vine decline transmitted by squash bug

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General Management Strategy

- Early-season control/suppression
- Timing is the key to reduce squash bug numbers
- Scouting and thresholds

  squash bug, 1 adult or egg mass / plant
- Remove plant debris after production is finished

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Squash Bug

Stages to target

- Colonize fields as adults
- Egg masses of about 24 eggs
- Nymphs hatch from eggs
- Older nymphs common when vines run

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Effective Home Insecticides: Squash Bug

- Check ID-128 Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky

Check with label as some pesticides are highly toxic to bees so use caution while plants in bloom

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Use of Row Covers for Insect Management

Row Cover Management

Mulch Evaluation – Season-long Weed Management

Cooperative studies with Iowa State (lead), Penn State, and Ohio State

Funded through USDA NIFA OREI, KDA, SCRI, OTP programs

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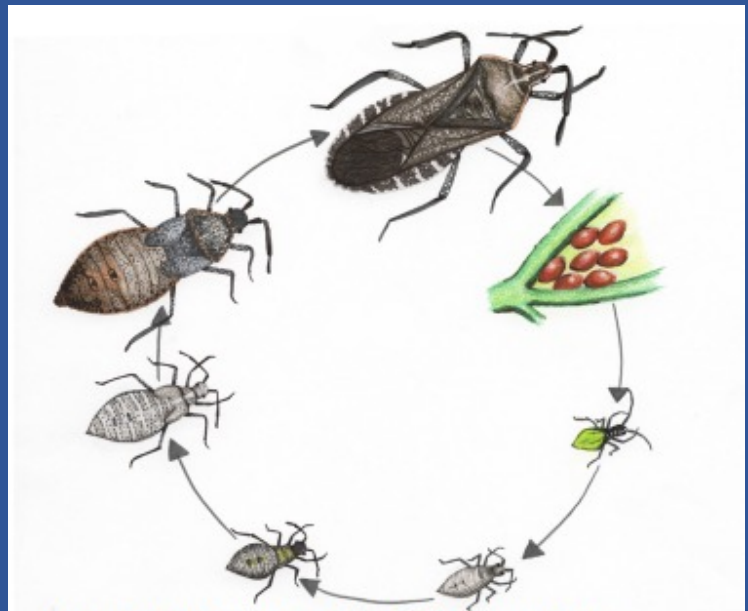
Put the Kibash on the Life Cycle of the Squash Bug



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