



KALRO/NAVCDP Factsheet No. 018 /2024

Flower Thrips (*Thrips nigropilosus*) and Onion thrips (*Thrips tabaci*) in Pyrethrum

Introduction

Thrips are small insects that feed on the lower surface of leaves by sucking plant sap. They also attack buds and flowers. Feeding on seedlings is the most damaging and can reduce crop stands in hot weather. The eggs are laid in plant tissue, the nymphs and adult are found in the flowers and larvae pupate in the soil.

Symptoms/ Damage

- Adult thrips are small (0.5 - 2.0mm), slender with long and narrow wings and fringed with long hairs
- Nymphs are white or yellow
- Both adult and nymphs feed on the base of the plant within the leaf sheaths
- Attacked leaves have a silvery sheen with small black spots of thrips excrements.
- Under heavy infestation, attacked buds and flowers fall off.
- Attacked flowers show speckling with small necrotic patches, become deformed and the quality is reduced



Thrip infestation (Infonet biovision, Janet, 2023)

Management Strategies

The control methods include:

Cultural practices

- Scout the fields twice weekly, looking for thrips
- Remove infected plants or crop residues
- Ensure that young crops are not planted next to older infested crops or an alternative hosts
- Remove weeds which serve as alternative hosts and harbour the pest season after season

Biological control

Spraying with Azadirachtin-containing products (e.g. Neemark, Neemroc, Achook, Nimbecidine) or biopesticides based on *Beauveria bassiana* (e.g. Beauvitech, Bio-Power or Botanigard) at manufacturers' recommendations.

Chemical control

Spray using insecticides containing Alpha-cypermethrin (e.g. Alfatox, Tata Alpha) or Acetamiprid (e.g. Aceta 20SP, Acetak Top 700WG) or Spinosad (e.g. Tracer 480 SC) or lambda-cyhalothrin (e.g. Duduthrin or Karate) at manufacturers' recommendations.



Compiled by: Janet Obanyi, Miriam Otipa, Violet Momanyi, Hannah Chore Oduo and Lusike Wasilwa

Editors: Nyabundi, K.W., Mukundi, K.T., Maina, P., Wanyama, H.N., Mugata, R.K., Kibunyi, N. K and Kinyua, Z. M.

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For more information, contact: Director General

Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization, Kaptagat Road, Loresho Nairobi Kenya

P.O. Box 5781 I, City Square, Nairobi, 00200, Kenya

Email: info@kalro.org

Safaricom: +254 722206986/722206988

Airtel: +254 733-333-223/4/733333299/4