



drdar

Department:
Rural Development & Agrarian Reform
PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

CABBAGE APHID

Introduction

Aphids (lintwala) look like small lice on plants. They are sucking insects that suck the juices from the leaves and tender shoots of plants. They can change the shape of the leaves causing the leaf to curl and can also spread diseases from plant to plant. There are different types of aphids but the usual type that affects crops like cabbage, kale, turnip, cauliflower, radish and broccoli is gray. The cabbage aphid is native to Europe but is now distributed worldwide.

Damage

- Aphids feed by sucking sap from their host plants
- They produce a sugary waste product called honeydew, which is fed on by ants. In turn, the ants provide the aphids with protection from natural enemies.
- The presence of ants in the garden could be a sign that aphids are also present
- Continued feeding by aphids causes yellowing, wilting and stunting of plants. Severely infested plants become covered with a mass of small sticky aphids due to honeydew secretions), which can eventually lead to leaf death and decay

Stage when plant is attacked

Vegetative stage or before harvest. Younger plants less than two months old are more often attacked than older plants

Cultural control

- Practice crop rotation – alternate with crops not from the cabbage family, such as beans or pumpkin.
- You can spray the plants using dishwashing liquid (1 tsp/4l) water in the morning or late in the evening, not as effective as synthetic insecticides



Plant part affected

- The underside of the leaves and on the center of the cabbage head
- Young leaves and flowers and often go deep into the heads of Brussels sprouts and cabbage
- Colonies are found on upper and lower leaf surfaces, in leaf folds, along the leafstalk, and near leaf axils.

Yield losses

- Aphids cause major losses to broccoli by reducing yield, with real damage being contamination of harvested heads of broccoli
- They can reduce cabbage farmers' income by decreasing the quality and damaging up to 90% of the crop

Chemical control

- Many insecticides are effective against aphids.
- Care must be taken that sprays thoroughly wet the plants, because of the waxy nature of the pest and crop.
- Insecticides are poisons so it is important that farmers follow all safety precautions on labels.



Scouting

- Fields should be scouted at least weekly for aphid presence
- If the infestation is not too high, the farmer can remove the infested leaves and destroy the aphids,
- It may be possible to leave the leaves on the plant and squash the aphids on the leaf surface.
- In small-scale farming, aphids can be monitored by filling yellow pans with water, if they are found in great numbers in the water traps additional control measures may be necessary

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Eastern Cape Department of Rural development and Agrarian Reform**