

Cucurbits

Vinegar Flies

Scientific Name: *Drosophila melanogaster*

(Reviewed 11/05, updated 11/05)



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DESCRIPTION OF THE PEST

[Vinegar flies](#), also known as fruit flies, are small, tan to amber-colored flies with red eyes, about 0.12 inch (3 mm) long. [Larvae](#) are small, white, legless maggots that get up to 0.2 inch (5 mm) long. They differ from driedfruit beetle larvae in that they do not have a hardened head capsule.

DAMAGE

Damage is similar to the driedfruit beetle in that the presence of vinegar flies in fruit causes downgrading or rejection of fruit. Vinegar flies are also responsible for transmitting spoilage organisms to sound fruit. Late ripening varieties are especially susceptible to damage as vinegar flies become widespread in tremendous numbers.

MANAGEMENT

Vinegar flies breed in any fermenting or decaying fruit but do not affect undamaged fruit. Remove or disc under damaged fruit to reduce the population. Harvest rapidly and early to reduce exposure of fruit to infestation. Sanitation is key to control.

PUBLICATION



UC IPM Pest Management Guidelines: Cucurbits

UC ANR Publication 3445

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