

Pest Alert: *Bactericera cockerelli*



Fig. 1. *Bactericera cockerelli* nymph on aubergine; they vary in colour: yellow, orange, or green; about 2 mm long © Chris Malumphy, Fera Sciences Ltd



Fig. 2. *Bactericera cockerelli* adult; they vary in colour from pale green to dark brown; about 2.75 mm long © Whitney Cranshaw, Bugwood.org

- ***Bactericera cockerelli***, known as the tomato potato psyllid (TPP), is a **highly destructive pest of potato** causing 'psyllid yellows' but even more importantly is the **vector of the bacterium *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum***, which causes '[Zebra Chip disease](#)'. This disease can have a devastating impact on the yield and quality of potato crops. Tubers infested with this bacterium often develop brown stripes internally which blacken when fried resembling the markings of a zebra, leading to rejection of potatoes for sale.
- On four occasions in 2017 and 2018, *Bactericera cockerelli* was intercepted on **chilli peppers** (*Capsicum*) and **aubergines** (*Solanum melongena*) imported into the UK from Mexico. Adults and several live nymphs were found underneath the calyx of aubergines.
- The psyllid, is native to southern North America, and has been introduced to New Zealand. In February 2017 an outbreak of the pest was discovered in Western Australia.
- As this is also a pest of other solanaceous crops including **aubergine, pepper and tomato**, and can feed on many other plants, it is a threat to **potato** crops and **glasshouse solanaceous crops** in the UK.

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For **England and Wales**, contact your local **APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector** or the **PHSI Headquarters**, York.

Tel: 0300 1000 313 (please select option 3 when calling)

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

For **Scotland**, contact the **Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit**:

Agricultural crops contact the local RPID officer: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/AOcontacts/contacts>

For non-agricultural crops, email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

For **Northern Ireland**, contact the **DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch**:

Tel: 0300 200 7847 Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>

For additional information on UK Plant Health please see:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/uk-plant-health-risk-register/>

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth/PlantDiseases>

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk>