

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).



Department
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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

For finds at garden centres, plant nurseries or private gardens in England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

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

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

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

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

Email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

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

For Northern Ireland, contact DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: www.daera-ni.gov.uk