



Alfalfa

Potato leafhoppers are starting to show up in alfalfa fields. In they can be damaging to alfalfa. These insects generally arrive in Oklahoma about the time the second cutting of alfalfa is ready and can cause significant damage to the crop through the rest of the summer. In late summer or early fall they migrate back to the southeastern part of the U.S. to overwinter.

Potato leafhoppers are lime green, torpedo or wedge-shaped insects with white eyes. They are very active insects and the adults will quickly hop or fly short distances when disturbed. Nymphs are similar in color and shape but lack wings.



Adult Potato Leafhopper

Potato leafhoppers have piercing-sucking mouthparts so when they feed they remove fluids and thus nutrients from the plants. This feeding may cause yellowing or reddening of the foliage and may lead to stunting. First indications of leafhopper feeding are a wedge or v-shaped yellowing at the leaf tip, commonly called hopper burn. As leaves turn yellow, crude protein is reduced making it less valuable for livestock. Continued feeding may stunt the plants, reduce yields and allow weeds to grow. If potato leafhopper feeding continues over several cuttings, future yield potential and winter survival may be affected.

Scouting should start now and continue until fall. Treatment should be considered before feeding causes yellowing and/or stunting. One application is usually sufficient if applied as a foliar spray. Guidelines for treatment thresholds are as follows:

Potato Leafhopper Thresholds in Alfalfa

Avg. Alfalfa Height (in.)*	Avg. No. of Leafhoppers/ 20 sweeps**
up to 3	4.0
3-6	10
12 or more	2.0

**Stem length = average plant height of plants from the sampled area

** Leafhoppers per sweep = average number of leafhoppers per sweep from at least 20 pendulum sweeps from at least five representative areas per field.

More information on the life cycle in Oklahoma visit the following web site:

<http://entopl.okstate.edu/ddd/insects/potatoleafhopper.htm>

Chemical Control: Products and their rates of application for potato leaf hopper in alfalfa are listed below. For precautions and other information on control contact your local OSU County Extension Agricultural Agent.

Chemical	Use Rate
Cobalt	7-13 oz 19-38 oz
Dimethoate	0.5-1.0 pt
Malathion	1.5-2.0 pt
Sevin	1.25 lb
Methomyl	1.5-3.0 pt
Lorsban	0.5-1.0 pt
Baythroid	0.8-2.8 oz
Pounce	4.0-8.0 oz
Warrior	1.92-3.2 oz
Proaxis	1.92-3.20 oz

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