

# Potato & tomato psyllid

## POTATO AND TOMATO PSYLLID FACTS ○○○

### What is it?

- The potato & tomato psyllid (*Bactericera cockerelli*) has been found on tomatoes and potatoes in the Auckland and Waikato region.
- It is a serious pest of potatoes and tomatoes, as well as capsicum and other solanaceous crops.
- Likely to spread from the Auckland and Waikato areas, but its range may be limited to areas with winter temperatures above 0°C.
- Adults look like tiny cicadas, 2 - 3 mm long.
- Adults jump and fly quickly when disturbed, and can be detected on yellow sticky traps.

### What does it do?

- Eggs usually laid on leaf edges or on veins on the underside of leaves, attached by a short stalk.
- Nymphs inject saliva into the plant while feeding, causing "psyllid yellows" which stunts growth and reduces yield by up to 80%.
- Nymphs are pale brown when they first hatch and gradually turn green.
- Nymphs secrete a granular, sugar-like substance which makes the plant sticky and dirty in appearance.

### How is it controlled?

- Upon detection in greenhouses spot spray the affected plant, then bag and dispose of the complete plant. Spray the surrounding plants and thoroughly inspect the crop for other psyllids. At the end of the crop cycle dispose of all green matter by burial or removal from the property.
- On potatoes, the existing control measures for aphids are likely to be effective in controlling the psyllid.
- If unsure how to manage this pest call your crop advisor or agrichemical supplier.



"Psyllid yellows" on potato, caused by feeding nymphs. Image courtesy of Whitney Cranshaw, Louisiana State University. [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)



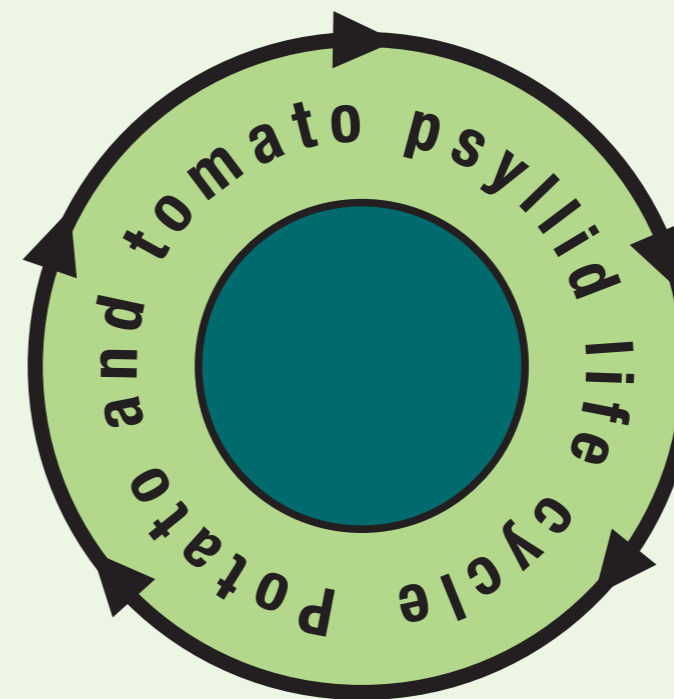
The adult form of the potato and tomato psyllid. Image courtesy of Whitney Cranshaw, Louisiana State University. [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)



A psyllid adult (centre), surrounded by feeding nymphs and eggs on a potato leaf. Image courtesy of Whitney Cranshaw, Louisiana State University. [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)



The sugary substance secreted by feeding psyllid nymphs. Photo by Ward Stepman, BCP Ltd



Psyllid eggs along the edge of a leaf, plus an adult. Image courtesy of Chris Inglis MAF Biosecurity NZ



Psyllid nymphs feeding on the underside of a leaf. Photo by Ward Stepman, BCP Ltd



Psyllid eggs attached to the edge of a leaf by a short stalk. Image courtesy of Jack Kelly Clark, University of California.

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