CHINCH BUGS

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CHINCH BUGS

Symptoms: Large, distinctive, circular yellowing patches that appear brown in the center, generally occurring only in sunny hot areas.
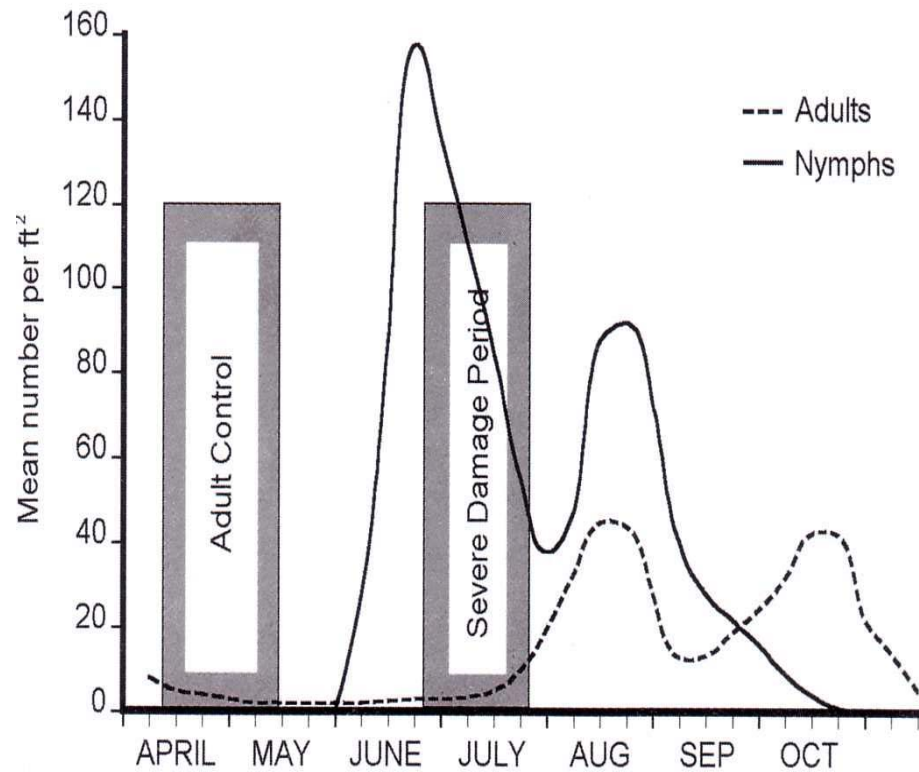
Identification: The Chinch bug has piercing-sucking mouth parts. Adults are quite small (5mm long), most are black with white wings, each of which have a distinctive triangular black mark. The legs are reddish brown in colour. Young chinch bugs are smaller wingless versions of the adults, but are red with a white back stripe

5 nymphal instar stages before final adult stage

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Life Cycle: Hairy chinch bug adults overwinter in protected areas and emerge as early as March. For the rest of the season, they feed by sucking the juice from grass blades, infecting a poison that causes blades to turn brown and die. The are especially active during hot, dry weather.

Adult chinch bugs overwinter and become active in April into May. If these adults are controlled, damage in June and July is prevented.

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Damaging Stage: Nymph, bug

Yearly Generations: One

Part of Plant Attacked:
Turfgrass leaves

Factors Effecting Distribution:
Excessive thatch, non-irrigated turf, high populations found in Kentucky bluegrass and fescues
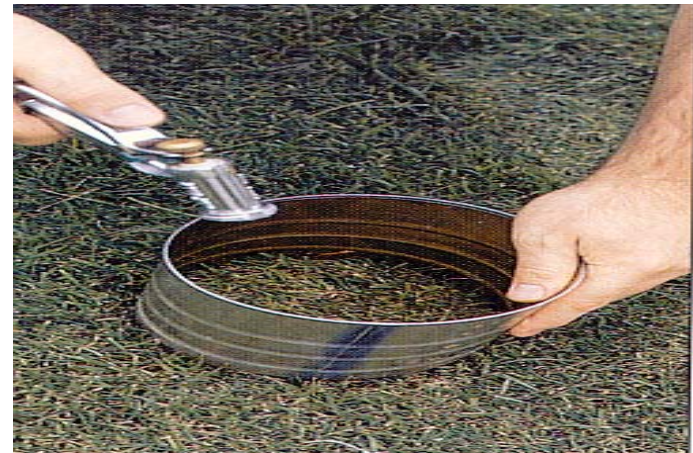
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Plant Phenological Indicators: Full bloom of the bird's foot trefoil signal peak egg laying

Sampling Technique: Coffee can

Threshold: > 20 – 25 per can

Control: The smaller stages of the chinch bug nymphs are easier to control. If damage was significant the previous year, apply when damage or large numbers of chinch bugs are noticed. For best results the lawn should be moist at the time of treatment. Do not water for 2 days after the application.

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Control: Hairy chinch bugs can be controlled easily if insecticides are applied correctly at the right time. The smaller stages of nymphs are easier to control since they do not need as much contact with insecticide. Treat adults and nymphs in late July, mid August. Endophyte-enhanced cultivars of perennial ryegrass, and fescues can resist feeding. Natural control can also occur through predation by the Big Eye Bug.

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