

Squash Vine Borer

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- Type Pest:** chewing insect (*Melittia cucurbitae*)
Type Metamorphous: complete (egg, larva, pupa, adult stages)
Period of Primary Occurrence: warm part of growing season
- Throughout the growing season when temperatures are warm

Plants Affected

- Squash, zucchini, pumpkins, hubbard squash and gourds
- Butternut squash is less susceptible than other squashes
- Cucumbers and melons are usually not attacked

Identifying Characteristics of Insect Pest

- One of the most damaging and most common pests of squash, especially in home gardens
- Eggs are laid on squash stems, normally close to ground level
- Eggs hatch into larvae which tunnel into the squash stem leaving to the subsequent demise of the plant or portion(s) of a plant (Fig. 2)
- Excrement (frass) produced by larvae may extrude from the stems (Fig. 6)
- Stems may wilt and die (Fig. 3)
- Adult stage is a colorful moth that flies during the daylight hours...resembles a wasp (Fig. 8)
- Moths about 1" long, with a brilliant orange and black abdomen and matching "hairy" hind legs (Fig. 8)
- Front wings are opaque and hind wings are clear with dark veins



Best Management Practices (BMP)

NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Plant borer-tolerant cultivars
- Covering emerging plants with floating row covers until female flowers are open can provide early protection on young plants
- Wrap a pair of pantyhose around the stem and the base of the plant

CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Spray with Biological Spray Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or pyrethrin along the stems of the plant
- Carbaryl (Sevin) can be applied as sprays or dusts



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Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. If the information does not agree with current labeling, follow the label instructions. The label is the law.

Always remember to read and heed six of the most important words on the label: "KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN"

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