

Rice water weevil

What is it?

The rice water weevil is a major pest of rice that is not present in Australia. This weevil attacks the roots and leaves of rice seedlings, and if it arrived in the Australian rice growing area would require additional and expensive chemical treatments.

What do I look for?

Adult rice water weevils (*Lissorhoptrus oryzophilus*) are about 3 to 4 mm in length, a greyish brown colour with darker brown markings on their back (see picture). The larvae ("maggots") are between 0.8 and 4.7 mm long (see picture).

There are a number of species of grey weevil in Australia that look very similar to this one, so advice from your department of agriculture should be sought if you have a suspect looking weevil in your crop. You should report a suspect weevil if you find grey weevils of the appropriate size (3-4mm) AND you have also found longitudinal feeding scars on the leaves (see the picture over page).

How does it spread?

The rice water weevil can fly for a short part of its life cycle, and can disperse rapidly by flight during this stage.

Where is it found?

The rice water weevil is not present in Australia. It is present in China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Korea (DPR), Canada, Mexico, USA, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Suriname and Venezuela.



Rice water weevil - adult



Rice water weevil - larvae

Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Industry Biosecurity Plan, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6260 4322.

Control options?

Yield loss resulting from the rice water weevil could be reduced by insecticide sprays if it was found in Australia, but this would be expensive and would adversely impact biodiversity in the crop.

The best method for control is to prevent it getting here in the first place. Crop hygiene practices, such as cleaning harvesters to prevent the spread of plant and root material, are a good way to prevent the spread of such pests. Using such farm biosecurity measures will not only reduce the impact of pests found in Australia, but will reduce the spread of exotic pests such as the rice water weevil if there were present but we did not realise. See the fact sheet about On-Farm Biosecurity Measures for the Rice Industry for further detail of hygiene strategies you can use.

Reporting

Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state/territory agriculture agency through the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881). To minimise the risk of disease spread, samples should not be moved until they have been checked by an expert.

If suspect grey weevils are found, check that they are the appropriate size (3-4mm) AND that there are longitudinal feeding scars on the leaves (see picture) before reporting. If you are unsure seek further advice from your department of agriculture.

This fact sheet was produced as part of the Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Rice Industry.



Distinctive longitudinal feeding scars caused by the rice water weevil

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is for general information only and no person should act, or fail to act on the basis of this material without first obtaining professional advice. Plant Health Australia and all persons acting for Plant Health Australia expressly disclaim liability with respect to anything done in reliance on this publication.

Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Industry Biosecurity Plan, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6260 4322.