

Exotic plant bugs

What are they?

There are two exotic plant bugs of concern to the strawberry industry:

- Tarnished plant bug (*Lygus lineolaris*)
- Western plant bug (*Lygus hesperus*)

These „*Lygus*“ bugs can affect a range of plants including strawberries, causing yield losses and requiring management steps. Neither of these bugs is present in Australia.

What to look for?

Lygus bugs damage fruit by puncturing individual seeds; in turn halting development of the berry in the area around the feeding site. Straw-brown seeds that are large and hollow are a good indication of *Lygus* bug damage, along with irregular colour and lumpy (“cat-faced”) fruit.

If you find any bugs that look like these (see figures on left) you should report them to ensure they are not these exotic plant bugs.



Tarnished plant bug (*L. lineolaris*) adult

Scott Bauer, USDA Agricultural Research Service



Western plant bug (*L. hesperus*) adult

Whitney Cramshaw, Colorado State University



Scott Bauer, USDA Agricultural Research Service

Tarnished plant bug (*L. lineolaris*) nymph

Where are they found?

Both of these plant bugs are known to occur predominantly in North America.

How can I protect my farm from exotic plant bugs?

Check your farm frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common strawberry pests so you can tell if you see something different.



Barry Freeman, Auburn University

Plant bug feeding damage to cotton bolls

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**



Ronald Smith, Auburn University

Swollen nodes and abnormal internodes of cotton due to plant bug feeding

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Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Strawberry Industry, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6215 7700.