

Fact sheet

Leaf footed bugs

What are Leaf footed bugs?

There are three different species of Leaf footed bug that are of concern to the almond and pistachio industries. These are the Leaf footed bug (*Leptoglossus clypealis*), the Western conifer seed bug (*L. occidentalis*) and the Western Leaf footed bug (*L. zonatus*). All three species are similar in appearance and cause similar damage.

On almonds, feeding early in the season (before the shell hardens) causes the kernel to shrivel or to abort. Feeding at this stage can also cause droplets of gum to form on the husk. Feeding later in the season (after the shell has hardened) can cause wrinkling and black spots to appear on the kernel.

On pistachio, feeding early in the season can cause epicarp lesions and cause nuts to drop from the tree. Feeding after the shell has hardened can cause kernel necrosis.

What do they look like?

Adult Leaf footed bugs are approximately 19-25 mm long, brown coloured with a white band across their back. The hind legs have a widened area that resembles a leaf, giving these bugs their name.

Eggs are brown coloured, rectangular and laid in a row on the leaves, fruit and nuts of the host plant.

The nymphs resemble the adults in body shape but are orange-red and black coloured.

What can they be confused with?

The adults can potentially be confused with other slim bodied bugs such as the Passionvine bug (*Leptoglossus australis*), however the leaf like projections on the hind legs and white band across the body are fairly distinctive. Any unusual bugs on almond or pistachio should be reported.



Adult Western Leaf footed bug (*L. zonatus*)

Natasha Wright, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bugwood.org



Adult Western Leaf footed bug (*L. zonatus*) on citrus

Ayanava Majumdar, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Bugwood.org



Adult Western conifer seed bug (*L. occidentalis*)

Kansas Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org



Leaf footed bug (*L. clypealis*)

Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org



Leaf footed bug (*L. clypealis*)

Whitney Cranstow, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org



Nymphs and rectangular shaped eggs laid in a line

David Stephens, Bugwood.org

What should I look for?

Look for the adult bugs and signs of kernel damage, such as gum droplets, epicarp lesions and kernel damage.

How do they spread?

Leaf footed bugs could be accidentally spread on plant material. The adults are also capable of flight allowing for localised spread.

Where are they now?

The Leaf footed bug (*L. clypealis*) is currently found in the southwestern United States. The Western conifer seed bug (*L. occidentalis*) is found in Europe and North America (from Canada to Mexico). The Western Leaf footed bug (*L. zonatus*) is found in from the southwestern United States to the northern half of South America.

How can I protect my farm from Leaf footed bugs?

You can protect your farm from Leaf footed bugs by checking your property frequently for the presence of any new pests and by closely examining the cause of any crop losses, epicarp lesions or kernel damage. Make sure you are familiar with the symptoms of common pests so you can tell if you see something different.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**

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