



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

123 HUNTINGTON STREET, P.O. BOX 1106, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06504

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 7, 2011

New agricultural pest discovered in Connecticut

Media contact: Kirby C. Stafford, III, State Entomologist (203) 974-8485

New Haven, CT - A new exotic fruit pest, called the spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*), was first found on a farm in Shelton, CT on August 19th by Dr. Richard Cowles, an entomologist at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES). Experiment Station surveys have confirmed the presence of this invasive fly in 25 towns in all Connecticut counties. In August and September, it severely damaged strawberries and red raspberries, rendering all or some of these crops unmarketable. We have also documented infestations in blackberries, blueberries, grapes, and many wild fruits in the state.

Of Asian origin, the spotted wing drosophila is related to common fruit flies that hover near ripe bananas and wine. Unlike other fruit flies that attack damaged fruit, females of this invasive species have a saw-like, egg-laying organ or ovipositor, which enables them to lay eggs in firm, ripening, and otherwise healthy fruit. Feeding by spotted wing drosophila larvae can completely destroy the fruit in a few days. The adult males are distinctive because they have a single black spot on the tip of each wing. Other fruit flies can have spotted wings, but do not have a single spot on their wings. Scientists reared larvae to adults or used vinegar traps to monitor for this pest.

Found in California in 2008, this small fly has now been reported from at least 18 states ranging from the western coastal states to Michigan, Florida and the Northeast. The spotted wing drosophila can be controlled on small fruits with certain insecticide applications. Scientists at the CAES are investigating the fly's distribution and behavior, and will develop management methods.

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Spotted Wing Drosophila

Photographs by Rose Hiskes and Katherine Dugas, CAES.

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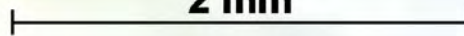


Photograph by R. Hiskes, CAES



Photograph by K. Dugas, CAES

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