



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE For Immediate Release

Thursday, December 2, 2010

NEW AGRICULTURAL PEST ARRIVES IN CONNECTICUT

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New Haven, CT – Entomologists at The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) have confirmed that the brown marmorated stink bug, an important agricultural pest, is present in Connecticut. Single specimens of the insect, collected by state residents in Cheshire, Darien, Hamden, New London, North Haven, Norwalk, West Haven, and Windham, were submitted to the CAES for identification or verified by an Experiment Station scientist.

Of Asian origin, the adult insect is less than three-quarters of an inch, a reported pest of a wide range of fruits and vegetables, such as corn, tomato, pepper, peach, nectarine, apple, pear, soybean, and red raspberry. The insect is widely distributed in eastern United States, particularly the mid-Atlantic region. The white bands on the antennae distinguish this pest from other northeastern stink bugs that are not as economically important. The bugs, which are not beetles, will seek shelter in homes and other buildings during the fall and can be a nuisance, but they do not bite or sting people. However, if disturbed, they will release a liquid which creates a pungent odor.

Populations of this insect are currently very low but are expected to rise in the state over the next few years. “We will need to determine if our crops are being affected” said Louis A. Magnarelli, Director of the CAES. The discovery of this new pest adds to our concerns. Two exotic mosquito species, also of Asian origin, are present in the state and could play an important role in the transmission of encephalitis viruses. Two destructive forest-defoliating insects, the Asian longhorned beetle and Emerald ash borer, are within 25 miles of northeastern and northwestern Connecticut, respectively. All of these insects will require careful monitoring and the development of different management strategies.”

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brown marmorated stink bug (photo taken by Michael Thomas, CAES)