

## **Problem:** Blister Beetles



**Hosts:** Tomatoes, beans, peas, potatoes, and other vegetables.

**Description:** Though there are several members of this family that can cause damage, the Striped and Gray Blister Beetles are the most common. The adult stage causes the damage; not the larvae. The beetles tend to move in swarms and can cause a great deal of defoliation but may not stay in one area for very long.

Blister beetles pass the winter in a pseudopupa stage and then go through a final molt in the spring. After a short period of activity, the larva enters the true pupal stage with the adults emerging midsummer.

Blister beetles have long, slender bodies with a relatively large head. These insects release a caustic substance when crushed that can raise blisters on the skin.

**Recommendations:** Often beetles will move on in a day or two. If beetles are handpicked, be sure to wear gloves. A number of stomach insecticides such as cyfluthrin (Bayer Vegetable & Garden Insect Spray), permethrin (Bug-No-More; Eight; Lawn, Garden, Pet and Livestock Insect Control) and lambda-cyhalothrin (Spectracide Triazicide, Bonide Beetle Killer) are also effective for control.

### **References:**

1. Insect Pests, A Golden Guide, Golden Press, pg 74.
2. Garden Insects of North America, Princeton University Press, pg 176

**Last Update:** 2/27/2014

---

Brand names appearing in this publication are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

*“Knowledge for Life”*

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service