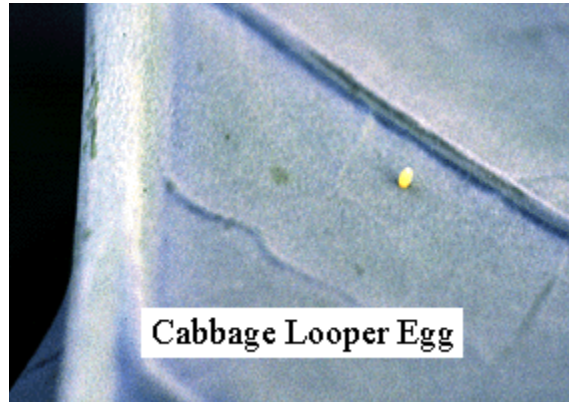


**Problem:** Cabbage Looper - *Trichoplusia ni*. Also known as cabbage worm.



**Hosts:** Primarily members of the cabbage family such as cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower.

**Description:** The cabbage looper larvae are a light green color with light stripes running down their backs. Loopers reach approximately 1½ inches long and have three pairs of slender legs near the head and three pairs of larger prolegs at the rear end. The middle section is legless and is looped when the insect is moving.

Larvae are the damaging stage of this insect. Worms feed on the undersides of leaves between the veins and leave ragged holes. They also feed on cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli heads. Larvae may be present from early spring to late fall.

**Recommendations:** Early control is essential to reduce injury. BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) and spinosad (Captain Jack's Dead Bug Brew, Monterey Garden Insect Spray, Natural Guard Spinosad) are effective organic products that are labeled for this pest. BT can be found in Dipel, Thuricide and other similar materials. Direct sunlight deactivates BT quickly so it is helpful to spray late in the day or on a cloudy day. Conventional insecticides such as carbaryl (Sevin Dust), malathion and methoxychlor are also effective but will kill natural enemies of these pests. Be sure to hit the underside of leaves where insects feed. Note that hitting the underside of leaves is easier when using a dust applied with a duster than when using a liquid spray.

**References:**

1. [Caterpillar Pests of Cole Crops in Home Gardens](#), University of Minnesota Extension

**Last Update:** 1/6/2022

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