

(revision date:6/3/2014)

Potato: Wireworms

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

Wireworms are the larvae of click beetles. The adult beetles are hard-shelled, tapered, and gray-brown to black in color. When turned on their back, they flip over with a sharp "click". The larvae live in the soil, feeding on seeds, underground stems, and small roots and burrowing into root crops. Typical damage to potato tubers consists of dark, 1/8"-1/4" holes and tunnels. The damage is often only cosmetic, although rots and other problems may attack via the wounds. The larvae are initially white with dark jaws, then turn dark yellow to brown as they mature. They are 1/4"-3/4" long and have six legs. They may resemble millipedes, which have many legs. Wireworms may require several years to reach maturity.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Crop rotation may help reduce damage by wireworms. Avoid planting root crops in the same locations each year.
- ~ Cut away damaged portions of tubers before use.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

None recommended

Potato: Wireworms

Images



~ Caption: *Potato wireworm*
~ Photo by: *Unknown*



~ Caption: *Potato wireworm damage*
~ Photo by: *Unknown*