

## Okra Leafhopper (*Amrasca biguttula* Ishida)

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The okra leafhopper (*Amrasca biguttula* [Ishida]) (Homoptera: Cicadellidae) lays its eggs in the midrib of the leaves. The pale green nymphs and the adults feed on the undersides of the leaves. The nymphs can be easily identified because they tend to move sideways when they are disturbed. The adults fly readily. The eggs require about a week to hatch, and the nymphs require another two weeks to become adults. The adults can be distinguished from other similar small green leafhoppers because they have a tiny black spot on each wing.

The leafhoppers have sucking mouthparts and feed on the juices in the plant leaves. When the insects are feeding, they damage the phloem tubes and cause disease-like symptoms called hopperburn. Damaged leaves curl at the edges and develop brown dead spots with a yellow halo at the edges of the leaves. Severely affected leaves may desiccate and fall off.

The crops most affected by this leafhopper in the Marianas are eggplant and okra. Elsewhere it is considered to be a serious pest of cotton and potatoes. The leafhopper is present throughout South and Southeast Asia, and in the Mariana Islands.

### Control

The local green eggplant in the Marianas is quite resistant to the leafhoppers as compared to most purple varieties. Its hairy leaves discourage leafhoppers from laying eggs and feeding, and it is resistant to developing symptoms of hopperburn. These leafhoppers are also readily killed by a number of insecticides.

For okra, scientists in India have found that the greatest yield return to the costs of spraying are obtained by protecting the crop between 45 and 75 days after planting.



Eggplant leaves with hopperburn



Leafhopper adult and nymph

Earlier and later sprays control leafhoppers but do not increase yield. If the use of chemicals is required or if additional information is desired, consult an Extension Agent at your local land grant institution. On Guam, you may also consult the Guam Fruit and Vegetable Pesticide Guide for current recommendations and permissible uses.

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