



Immature stages



Adult

Common Name: Sweet Potato Whitefly
Scientific Name: *Bemisia tabaci* (Gennadius)

Eggs are laid singly on the top or underneath leaves. They hatch in about five days and the immatures take about three weeks to develop into adults. Immatures resemble oval, scale-like objects. They are greenish-white. They remain attached to the leaf and do not move. Adults appear as tiny white flies which are less than one millimeter long. They are usually found on the underside of leaves or flying around the plant.

The whitefly feeds by sucking plant juices from the underside of leaves. Severely attacked plants may become stunted and discolored. Disturbed plants may produce clouds of adult insects which quickly resettle.

The plants affected by the whitefly are cabbage, broccoli, and related plants; sweet potato; tobacco; eggplant; cotton; soybean; hibiscus; and other plants. This insect attacks more than 300 species of plants.

The distribution of the whitefly is worldwide, including Guam, Saipan, Belau, and Pohnpei. This insect has been known from Saipan since the 1930s, but was not reported from Guam until 1985.

Control: The sweet potato whitefly normally is not a problem on most plants. Insecticidal sprays may be necessary on cabbage crops. For current recommendations, consult an Agricultural Extension Agent by calling 734-2575, 734-2579, 734-2518 or 734-4753.

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 CES Publication # PS 88-5