

Green Peach Aphid

(*Myzus persicae*)

Description:

Immature stages – Nymphs are similar to wingless adults in shape and color, but smaller. Unlike most aphids, GPA do not tend to form large colonies, but are generally evenly distributed across leaves.

Adult stages – Winged (alate) adults have a black head and thorax and a yellowish-green abdomen with a large dark patch in the middle of the abdomen as viewed from above. They measure about 2 mm in length, and, if found on vegetables, are rounded projections at the base of the antennae (tubercles) that point toward the midline of the head. These projections are on all stages. Wingless adults are yellowish, greenish, or reddish. The cornicles are long and colored similar to the body.

Biology:

Life Cycle –In vegetable crops in Georgia, winged adults invade fields and can do so throughout the production seasons. Both winged and wingless adults give birth to live young without mating (parthenogenetic reproduction) on vegetable crops. Under favorable conditions, the aphids develop through 4 or 5 instars in about 1 week and give birth to offspring shortly thereafter, with generation time as short as 10 to 12 days. Females are reported to produce 1.6 to 3.75 nymphs per day over a 15 to 20 day reproductive cycle.

Seasonal Distribution – Green peach aphids can invade fruiting vegetables throughout the spring and fall production season, but typically are more of a problem in cooler parts of the fall season.

Damage to Crop:

Green peach aphids can build large populations on a variety of crops. On young plants, they can cause wilting and stunting. The red GPA colonizes the flowering stalk of tobacco plants (bottom image). At harvest, they can represent a contaminant both through their direct presence and through production of honeydew which gives rise to sooty mold. In many crops, their greatest threat is transmission of viral diseases, such as cucumber mosaic virus (CMV, middle image). This species transmits over 100 plant viruses, persistent and non-persistent transmission. Adults and nymphs can transmit viruses, but winged adults are of greatest importance due to mobility. Mummified aphids, golden brown aphid shells, can indicate parasitism (top image).

Management:

Green peach aphids are generally controlled with application of insecticides; however, insecticide resistance has been widely documented in this species. The red phase of this pest is reported to generally be more difficult to control.

Wingless adults and mummies



Winged adult



Green Peach Aphid in tobacco

