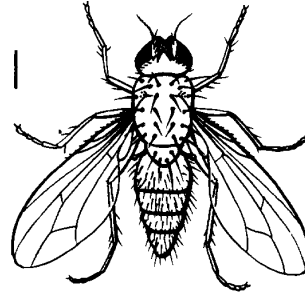


ONION MAGGOT *Diptera: Anthomyiidae Hylemya antiqua*

DESCRIPTION

Adults are about 4 mm long, gray-brown, with a slightly humped appearance. **Larvae** are dirty-white or yellowish, legless, and about 6 to 8 mm long when mature.



ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

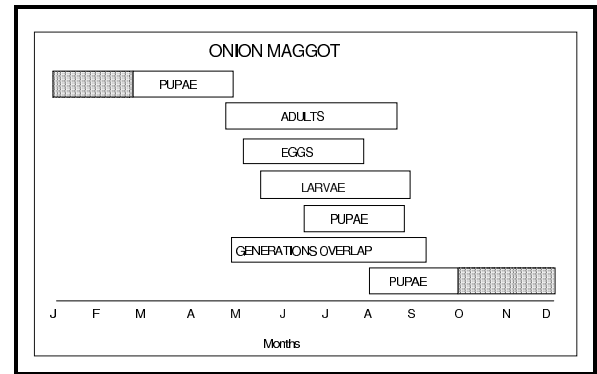
The onion maggot is probably the most serious insect pest on onions in the northwest. Seedling onions infested with maggots wilt and die in short sections of row, or in small clumps. One maggot may move from one plant to another and destroy a dozen or more seedlings. Larger onions may survive, but usually rot or are distorted which makes them unmarketable. Injury from field to field may vary from 10 to 85% of the total crop depending on the density of the maggots.



(after OR Ext. Serv. Bull. 747)

DISTRIBUTION AND LIFE HISTORY

This pest occurs throughout the United States and in all provinces of Canada. The onion maggot overwinters as a pupa in the soil. Adults appear in early May, mate, and begin laying eggs in the soil around the bases of seedlings or transplants. The eggs hatch in two to three days, and the maggots attack the bulbs or roots, boring upward toward the stems. After feeding for two or three weeks, the maggots enter the soil and pupate (see below for Idaho). A new generation of flies emerges in about two weeks. There are usually three generations each year, although most of the third generation does not emerge until the following spring. In Idaho, most of the pupae from the first generation overwinter.



MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Two methods of control are used to reduce the seriousness of this pest; seed treatment and soil treatment with registered insecticides. Soil treatments are usually applied in the furrow at planting time or as preplant broadcast treatments. See the Pacific Northwest Insect Control Handbook for a list of registered insecticides and for proper timing in specific areas.