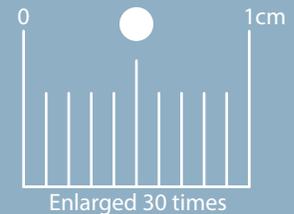


Sugarcane Aphid Identification

Robert Bowling & Jason Thomas

Sugarcane aphids are a threat to sorghum.

Though sugarcane aphids (SCA) are very small, they are important because they can lower sorghum crop yields and damage harvesting equipment.



How do they do it?

Aphids damage sorghum by feeding on the plant. They do this by inserting their needle-like mouth into the plant's leaves to suck out its liquids. The key to the sugarcane aphids' success is its life cycle—they reproduce asexually and very quickly.

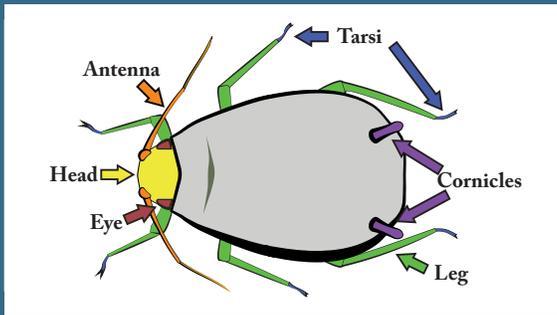
Other types of damage:

Sugarcane aphids produce honeydew which they deposit on the plant's leaves. This sticky substance attracts a harmful fungus called black sooty mold. Honeydew can also clog harvesting equipment.



How to detect and identify sugarcane aphids:

To find out if Sugarcane aphids are present in your field, start by scouting the upper and lower leaves of your sorghum. These aphids are very small, so you will need a hand lens to see them clearly. Use the back of this sheet to help you with positive identification.



General aphid anatomy

Aphids have thin legs and antennae which are about the length of their body. All aphids have two appendages called cornicles that stick out near the back end of their abdomen.

Positive identification:

You can identify sugarcane aphids by remembering “the FACT is black.” If the aphid has Feet, Antennae, and Cornicle Tips that are black, you know that you have a sugarcane aphid. Use large adults that do not have wings for identification purposes.

F eet
A ntennae
C ornicle
T ips

SCA

Sugarcane Aphid



These have black tipped feet, black tipped antennae, and black tipped cornicles.

Greenbug Aphid



Greenbug aphids have black tipped feet and antennae, but their cornicles are never black.

Common Imitators

Corn Leaf Aphid



Corn leaf aphids have black feet, antennae, and cornicles, but they also have a black head and their feet are entirely black.

Yellow Sugarcane Aphid



Yellow Sugarcane aphids don't have any black on them.

Credits:

Greenbug aphid, cornleaf aphid, yellow sugarcane aphid and single sugarcane aphids raised by Scott Armstrong, USDA-ARS Lab Stillwater, OK, and photographed by Rick Grantham. All other photos and graphics provided by Jason Thomas.



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