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# Potato Thrips

## Recognize the problem

Adult potato thrips are small, 0.8 - 1.0 mm in length, and range from pale yellow to dark brown. Larvae are up to 3.3 mm in length and yellow-orange at maturity. Eggs are placed singly, just under the epidermis of succulent leaves, flowers, stems or bulb tissue. Larvae are whitish to yellowish.

Adults use their mouthparts to pierce the surface of leaf allowing them to suck liquid from the plant cells. The appearance of the damage is silvery patches or streaks on the leaves.

## Background

Potato thrips complete their life cycle in 15 - 18 days. Thrips prefer to feed on young plant tissue on newly emerged leaves.

Thrips may also serve as vectors of plant diseases, especially purple blotch caused by *Alternaria* sp. fungus.
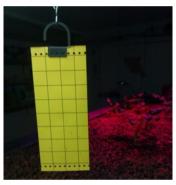
## Management

- Field sanitation: discard infested transplants
- Mulch may help. Place straw or plastic mulch on top of the soil during planting
- Fertilization: do not use excessive amounts of Nitrogen
- Practise crop rotation between carrot and potato
- Plant trap crops such as cucurbits or chrysanthemum
- Use yellow or blue traps to attract adults
- Spraying water can reduce the population of thrips
- Chemical insecticides are used when the number of leaves affected exceeds 15%. Examples of insecticides are Polytrine P 440EC (profenofos + cypermethrin) or Confidor 100SL (imidacloprid)

Adult thrips. (Photo by Dam Ngoc Han)

Yellow sticky trap. (Photo by Aquaponics Labs, via Flickr)

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Thrips palmi*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Vietnam

PlantwiseVietnam

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