Alfalfa Seed

Alfalfa Seed Chalcid

Sue Blodgett

This tiny pest is a small, black wasp measuring about 1/12 of an inch in length. Chalcids overwinter as a fully grown larva inside seed. Larvae pupate in the spring, emerging as adults after about 14 days. There may be 2-3 generations per year; however, mature larvae may survive for 2 years before pupating. Eggs are deposited into the young developing seed. Only one larva may develop within a single alfalfa seed.

Plant damage occurs when larvae infest seed. Chalcid infestations occur when seed is left in the field, or infested alfalfa seed from field margins or volunteer plants are not harvested.

Controls

Chemicals are less effective because eggs, larva and pupa stages develop within seed, protected from insecticide application. Late maturing fields usually develop heavier infestations.

Cultural controls, especially field sanitation is the best approach to managing alfalfa seed chalcid; practices such as harrowing or discing to bury chalcid infested seed 1 inch deep followed by irrigation are effective in preventing adults from emerging. Infested seed should be cleaned and screening destroyed. Destroy chaff and/or screenings. Eliminate volunteer alfalfa plants growing near seed fields.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Insecticide</th>
<th>Lbs Active Ingredient per Acre (Fl oz. or oz. product)</th>
<th>Preharvest Interval, remarks</th>
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| Proaxis     | 2.56 – 3.84                                            | 7 days for hay. 24 hr REI. **Extremely Hazardous to Bees!** Do not apply to alfalfa in bloom. Do not apply more than 0.24 pt /A per cutting. Do not apply more than 0.96 pt/A per season. Advisable to move bees during application and allow 3 }
Warrior 1EC<sup>R</sup><sub>1</sub> 2.56-3.84 oz 7 days for hay. 24 hr REI. **Extremely Hazardous to Bees!** Do not apply to alfalfa in bloom. Do not apply more than 0.24 pt /A per cutting. Do not apply more than 0.96 pt/A per season. Advisable to move bees during application and allow 3 (low rate) or 5 (high rate) days before re-introduction of bees

**R** Restricted Use Pesticide  
**1** Labeled for chemigation  
**2** 24c labels may be available, check with State Dept of Agriculture  
**3** Several formulations.

* Chemigation varies by formulation. Please check label.

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Categories: Alfalfa Seed, Insects

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