

Stink Bug Warriors: Reports from the Frontlines

Lee Royer, Frederick County Master Gardener

Humans versus Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs war continues to rage. BMSBs appear to be holding their own. Scientists are still gathering data for the 2011 season; final results of experiments are not yet tallied. Once hibernation is completed for the season, official results should start to appear on our recommended web sites such as the University of MD Extension Home and Garden Information Center (www.hgic.umd.edu.) For now, we have reports from the brave men and women fighting the good fight – local farmers, gardeners, and homeowners.

Battles Won

“This year, I developed a plan for the BMSB. I knew they weren't dangerous, so I was less afraid. I monitored entrance points to our home with a newspaper in hand, smacked and disposed of any intruders. I kept an easy-to-manage, container vegetable garden on the deck. I patrolled the garden with a cup of soapy water each morning before watering. When I noticed a BMSB, I just tapped it into the cup. The control was a success. The interior is virtually bug-free and we have lots of tasty tomatoes. I'm especially pleased I was able to manage the BMSB's without harmful chemicals.” *Nikole Brundick, Lake Linganore, FC Master Gardener*

“My husband purchased a device I scoffed at, but it brings him such joy to use it that I feel I must pass along word of "The Bugzooka". Yes, that's really what it's called. It's a handy device for reaching bugs in out-of-the-way places, as well as just for picking up BMSBs without your bare hands. It sucks them into a little chamber and holds them there captive while you plot which way you'll ensure their demise. It's very effective, quiet, fairly inexpensive, lightweight and apparently fun to use, as my husband patrols the house with it slung across his chest looking like Rambo - with a very satisfied smile on his face as he sucks up each of the little buggers.”

Annamarie Creamer, Ijamsville, FC Master Gardener

Miolea Organic Farm in Adamstown was not hit as hard by BMSB this year. Choosing their battles wisely, they didn't plant peppers which were totally decimated last year. They planted more cherry tomatoes which many observed to be less appealing to BMSB. Farmers last year reported BMSBs invading first from the edges of fields, so they planted a fifteen foot buffer or trap crop of sunflowers and pumpkins around the vegetable patch. They observed this buffer carefully. When egg masses and young hatchlings (called nymphs) emerged, they sprayed with approved organic insecticidal soap which will kill BMSB at those stages. While not unscathed, Miolea Farm did come through the season much better than last year.

Brian and Carolyn Biggins, Adamstown, Miolea Organic Farm

Battles Lost

“The hateful stinkbugs have not been as bad this year until yesterday. I saw one of the local farmers cutting down his corn stalks and shuddered with dread as I traveled home. His stink bugs lit out for new territory when the stalks were cut and our yard/house was one that was chosen. The same thing happened last year. They even took over a hornet's nest. I went out to spray the nest and only stink bugs came out. “

Brunswick Homeowner

“While watching TV, I spied a stink bug on the wall and got up to kill it. Coming back I tripped on an afghan that fell to the floor when I got up, and this propelled me into a corner of the wall, opening a gash in my forehead; I fell to the floor, bleeding profusely, and my husband called the ambulance. It took 17 stitches to

close the wound. Also this year, our Prius died on the highway and was towed to the dealer who found a stink bug lodged in the air intake. Yet another time, our air compressor became home to a stinkbug that caused the compressor to fail – another bill.”
Sarah Drenning, Woodsboro, Homeowner

Allies

“We have many stink bugs - not nearly as bad as I've heard from others, but still a large nuisance. Over the last several days I have observed the Mocking Birds making a meal of stink bugs, even going as far as plucking them off the patio screen door while 3 anxious cats watch. The Mocking birds seem to be patrolling the deck area around the molding and must be very hungry (maybe stink bugs are yummy?). Even as I'm writing this they are out flying around snatching up stinkbugs! Go Mockingbirds!!!”

Vicki Senires, Monrovia, FC Master Gardener

Strategies and Weapons

Secure your home, outbuildings, and vehicles as best you can, and quickly. The fall hibernation is upon us. The enemy is preparing to invade our homes. Now is the time to make sure caulking is tight. Have a container of soapy water or shop vac handy to dispose of the opponents. Bugzookas are recommended. Lots of folks are trying lots of things with mixed results. While not recommended officially by FCMGs and results are highly variable, people are trying traps, moth balls, foggers, and pesticides of all sorts. Avoid flame throwers. Please follow directions carefully when using any product that may harm civilians, such as pets, children, other unsuspecting humans or beneficial insects.

Stinkbug Warriors, we salute you!

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ADDENDUM

On 9/22/2011 I sent a message to FCMGs and those who attended FCMG 2011 mini seminars on BMSBs. Following are the responses I received. Thanks to all contributors.

Hi Stinkbug Warriors,

I hope this message finds you all with fewer BMSB than last year. I am putting together an update on the BMSB situation for our Master Gardener column for the newspaper. I would love to hear short observations from you about the BMSB population this year, 2011. Any tidbits you'd like to share are welcome. Some questions I have are:

Are you seeing as many trying to enter your homes as last year at this time?

Where they as large a pest in your gardens or landscapes as last year?

What sorts of things have you tried to deter them? Has anything worked?

In the spring, did you observe a mass exit of BMSB from your home/garage/outbuildings in the spring?

Don't feel restricted to these questions; they are just a few off the top of my head to get you started.

Thanks for your help,

Lee Royer

Frederick County Master Gardener

This summer was worlds easier than last. I'm not sure if there were fewer BMSB's this year or if I was simply more prepared for the little beasts. Last year, I met the BMSB. I was horrified. Bugs give me the creeps. These bugs were everywhere. I sprayed pesticides. They just kept coming. It was awful. What to do? I watched. I studied. I learned the BMSB's habits. I learned what their eggs looked like and where they laid them. I learned they loved to suck tomato juice. I learned they would crawl through the sliding glass door tracks to enter my home. I learned the BMSB's would not hurt me but they would annoy me and eat my food. I learned the BMSB's could not crawl out of a cup of soapy water.

Nikole Brundick, Lake Linganore

We definitely have fewer BMSBs around our house than this same week last year (by the 1st of October last year I was near a bug-induced nervous breakdown...) I think, or at least it's my best guess, that we failed at getting out vegetable garden in this past spring, so there has been far less food to entice them 'round here. Last year our 14 tomato plants were COVERED with them.

The other factor may be that our next door neighbor purchased stink bug traps from Southern States and these do seem to be catching a great many of the pests. Like Japanese Beetle traps, I've always said the best place for such devices is in someone else's yard, and I do think they may be drawing many of the bugs over there.

We do still have a few wayward BMSBs scouting out our house for their winter quarters- maybe 5-15 a day (last year it was hundreds. really.) My husband purchased a device I scoffed at, but it brings him such joy to use it that I feel I must pass along word of "The Bugzooka". Yes, that's really what it's called. It's a handy device for reaching bugs in out-of-the-way places, as well as just for picking up BMSBs without your bare hands. It sucks them into a little chamber and holds them there captive while you plot which way you'll ensure their demise. It's very effective, quiet, fairly inexpensive, lightweight and apparently fun to use, as my husband patrols the house with it slung across his chest looking like Rambo - with a very satisfied smile on his face as he sucks up each of the little buggers. The war continues!

Cheers and good luck in your own battles... *Annamarie Creamer, Ijamsville*

Strange stuff - I live on the southeast side of Braddock Mountain off Mt. Zion Road. I have only seen one bug so far this fall. I anticipate a population as significant as last year but as off yesterday there was just the one in sight.

Steve Carter, Mt. Zion Road

I have noticed a lower BMSB population this year. At this time last year my house was like a hive. I wonder if due to cooler temperature and rain or do they swarm and move on. They are just starting to come back. In my garden this year I did not plant squash, beans, melons, or cucumbers, because the stink bugs seemed to be more attracted to them. I pulled tomatoes up early in hopes of deterring BMSB's. Don't bother with the Stink Bug Traps, they are attracted to them but don't really get inside and get trapped. We bought one just for fun, maybe it helps keep them away from the house.

I did do a major garage clean out in the middle of summer. They seem to like tight places like stacked boxes, plastic, pots, & under things if left in the bed of the truck. We seem to have more at our shop in Frederick this year than last year.

Melanie Jackman, Mt. Airy MD

I was pleasantly surprised in early spring/summer to find the BMSB rather lacking (!) in my garden and yard. I had a good backyard crop of tomatoes and veggies, too...until around mid-to-late August, when the stink bugs mysteriously re-appeared. I have many more Juliet tomatoes coming in, but they are clearly impacted by the bugs. The tomatoes have the trademark dimples left by the BMSB and once picked, the tomatoes tend to shrivel into themselves. Darn it all!

We don't seem to see as many of the bugs, though---it's almost as though there are a very, very small number doing quite a lot of damage. I have only actually seen (and hand-killed) maybe five of the ..ahem!...buggers. (Last year there were quite a lot of them, as I recall. It was difficult to keep up with them, and they totally destroyed my garden. I had nothing to freeze last year--though the year before I had frozen 85 quarts of tomatoes with the same number of the same variety of plants-- and was able to salvage only a few

tomatoes for our salad each evening.) This year I have frozen maybe 15-20 quarts---but I started with many fewer tomato plants, given last year's disaster. So the few stink bugs that are living in the yard this year are good at hiding...and at becoming quite good at eating my end-of-year tomatoes now!

We did not see a mass exodus of the bugs from our home or garage this spring and we aren't seeing many trying to enter our home now. ...Although, of course, they are sneakily entering into our home with us unaware of it...I'm crossing my fingers for next year. *Marie Finn, Frederick (city)*

Like Mineral, VA was the epicenter for the earthquake; Jefferson, MD is the epicenter for BMSB. Last fall they managed to get into the house and were hiding in the unfinished basement. It was like a horror film when we had to pull back the insulation and literally hundreds would fall and fly around. We tried to get rid of them to no avail. In the spring they were all over the sliding glass doors in the basement trying to get out. It wasn't until a week ago that they started really climbing all over the house again. Our best weapon against them has been the fly swatter. I can't even imagine how many we have killed. At any given time we can go out on our deck and kill a hundred without even trying. It's time for one of our predator insects to step up to the plate and take on these brown demon spawn. *Patrick Zaharoff, Jefferson*

I saw surprisingly few stinkbugs this year (probably fewer than 20)! I had made 2 of the containers from large soda bottles that you showed us how to make at the seminar but I really didn't need to use them. My neighbors down the street had a problem with them crawling on the screened in porch early in the season but they suddenly disappeared and did not return. I haven't spoken with anyone in my neighborhood that has had a problem this year, so we were fortunate. *Name withheld, Cloverhill*

The Battle Begins Today (9/22/11) -- Funny that I should receive your e-mail the very day that we have been inundated with stink bugs. I open the garage door this morning to start mowing and I counted 17 BMSB's all around the outside surface of the house, in fact there were 11 on and around the center garage door and 23 on the third garage door. I suck most of them up with a wet/dry vac, took the garage door opener with me while I mowed and closed the door. When I finished mowing more had covered the surface around the garage doors, in fact I counted 43 of them, are they back? I would say in full force. Up until the farmers around us started green chopping their corn it didn't seem too bad, we had noticed some on our tomatoes but not in great numbers until today.

We have already seen some in the house, they just seem to appear from nowhere, we have tried to seal the house as well as we can, fix or chalk areas that we thought they could get in to no avail and as I said the battle begins. It looks like so far from what I see they are back even worse than last year. I have every intention of waging a war; I just hope the vacuum holds up. My wife and I certainly enjoy the seminar we attended, we smile when we see all the so call traps on the market, we like our neighbors so we can't bring ourselves to buy traps for their yard. Hopefully if Master Gardner's comes up with something new to combat this invasion please let us know. *Bob & Linda Mehaffie, Middletown*

This summer I rarely saw a BMSB but now they are starting to congregate in the evenings. Stinkbugs have been scarce at my home in New Market area. I have seen a handful all summer. There are more the last couple of weeks - 1 to 2 dozen - and they are starting to congregate on the side of the house, windows, and umbrellas. None of the tomatoes I raised this summer (5-6 plants) were bothered by them.

However. I spoke with a colleague who lives in the Woodsboro area and she has been swamped with them - more agriculture there than here, I am assuming explains it. *Julia Cubit, New Market*

Seen just a few in the past 2 weeks. I had the outside of my house sprayed by the Mosquito Squad of Frederick for stink bugs on Monday and will have them do a repeat spraying the first week in Oct. Hope it helps. There was a mass exit by June as I found none when I cleaned the garage that month. You are right about them liking the color white. The brick part of my home attracted practically none, while white siding on my garage doors, back of the house and my sun room attracted them last spring. I never had the number that many complained of at the spring meeting from Jefferson and Thurmont. I live in the Ijamsville area near New

Market. I made one of the coke bottle things with the LED light in the bottom (it was on U-tube) and put the light on at night and caught lots in my sun room in the spring. I made one for my friend and she caught lots in her garage at night. They are smart and know when the vacuum hose extension is getting near them as they flew or tried to hide in my sun room last spring. I hope I have fewer to deal with this fall. I did buy a trap in Home Depot but have not set it out, yet. *Susan, Ijamsville/New Market*

I did not see a mass exodus of stink bugs from our attic this spring as I had suspected we would. In fact I didn't see any actual bugs until just a few weeks ago although I saw evidence of them in the garden. We had some mild stink bug damage to our tomatoes but nothing like last year's problem.

Late this summer my husband was attacked by a swarm of yellow jackets when he accidentally dislodged a 4x4 beam edging our raised garden bed. When he returned to the garden to try to kill the yellow jackets, he found hundreds of dead stink bugs under the 4x4 beam. Perhaps the yellow jackets were killing them? We decided to work with "the enemy of my enemy" and leave the yellow jackets alone.

Approximately 3 weeks ago we saw the first couple of stink bugs in the house and now they are almost as bad as they were last fall. The exterior of every window and door screen is covered with them. We have started leaving a shallow pan outside our patio door filled with a little water and dish soap. Each morning we find it full of dead stink bugs which we toss in the compost bin before refilling the pan with soapy water. We plan to set another pan in the attic to see if we can drown some more up there as they start moving inside for the winter. *Laurie Kreh, Frederick*

We have had two inside our house at this point. I have found dead stink bugs in some spider webs near doorways...obviously I am leaving the spiders alone. I am keeping the house more closed up than usual for this time of year. *Nancy Daughtry, Boyds*

I think the stink bugs are as bad this year as last. The orchards out here in Hedgesville/Falling Waters thought that the summer was better this year with the sprays available. I noticed more than I noticed last year. All of the ornamental and potted plants were covered this summer. BMSB's, really started congregating heavily in the last day or two. They are coming in through the gaps in the screens and in through a hole in the screening put over the exhaust vents. One window screen has also been chewed and has two holes in it. (Note: screening material is not metal but some sort of plastic fiber, I guess.) I still feel as if we're near ground zero. My "CSA guy" has his farm in Inwood, WV and he says he has had no problem...his chickens eat them!

Debbie Erbes, Hedgesville/Falling Waters

We live in a wood on Harmony Road, NE of Myersville, and have only recently had stinkbugs trying to get into the house for their winter shelter. They started attacking our tomatoes the week of August 14th. As was mentioned at the stinkbug meeting, they do not seem to bother the cherry tomatoes. We had planted quite a few of those because of your information. (quite a few people reported their cherry tomatoes were not bothered as much by BMSB last year)

Last year we regularly left garage doors open and ended up with quite an infestation there. We had quite a few in the house too - they come in around window screens, sliding glass door screens, chimneys, and any unprotected opening to the outside. We don't use our fireplace much, but when we did have a fire this spring, it rained stinkbugs down our chimney! Our chimney caps didn't keep them out. A smaller mesh screen on the caps would have worked but that reduces the chimney draft.

Here's a quick summary of things we found that work. Note that in each case we just used their instincts against them. No baits or special chemicals required:

1. They are attracted to light, so you can make them come to you instead of chasing them (the same trick works for bees and moths, etc). At night turn all the lights off except one. Eventually they will come to the light and you can dispatch them. They may also go to the TV screen. During the day, they will go to windows, trying to get outside to feed and reproduce, and you can get them there. (Don't let them out to multiply in the wild!!)

2. When menaced, they drop straight down a couple feet before taking wing. Partially fill a small plastic jar (peanut butter jar, or a cutoff 1 liter soda bottle) with a healthy squirt of soap in water. Hold the jar under the bug and menace it with a pencil. It will obligingly drop into the jar and drown. The pencil is handy to tickle them out of hiding places too. If they are well up the wall and out of reach - just use a longer stick. This method also works, but not as well, using only the jar (In some soapy solutions they float. If you use Ajax Orange Dish washing liquid in water, they sink to the bottom, which masks the odor for awhile.) You can also menace them with a feather duster, and they will climb onto it. Then transfer them to the jar. Sometimes they will fly at your face to startle you (Japanese beetles do the same), but they are harmless.

3. Bug Zappers work, especially at night or in low light areas. In our garage we set one up on some 2x2's atop a 5 gallon bucket filled with a few inches of soapy water and left it on day and night. The bugs are clumsy, and if they don't get zapped, they will just fall into the bucket and drown. We caught and killed thousands of them this way (no exaggeration). You can just set this up and let it run. No effort required! The same thing worked for a yellow jacket infestation we had one time. Do NOT set up the zapper outdoors or we will kill a lot of beneficial insects.

4. Shop Vacs work for capturing large huddles of them or for hard to reach places. The vac process seems to kill them outright. No soapy water required. Put panty hose over the filter to keep it from getting fouled. Surprisingly the odor from the shop vac is not too bad.

5. Predators. It looks like the spiders around here are developing an appetite for stinkbugs!! We have seen quite a few dining and getting pretty fat on them. Bon appetit, guys!! Haven't seen any other predators yet.

We had a bunch of them between the front door and the storm door. I thought it would work well to spray them with poison....don't do that, it scares them and the smell they give off does not wash off! We smelled them for weeks after that, every time we came into or went out of the house! This is probably more information than you wanted, but it's an ongoing war! *Jean & Steve Struharik, Myersville*

Thanks for doing this. I've seen almost no bugs over the summer as compared to loads of them last year. In the last 2 weeks or so, however, I've seen a few in my house, but again in far smaller numbers than last summer/fall. Last year, I vacuumed them up and/or drowned them in soapy water. This year, there's been no real need to organize my kill efforts. *Name withheld, Frederick County*

I noticed that they seem to be attracted to an electromagnetic field. In my basement where I had my shop vac plugged in used to wage warfare against the BMSB, it was not unusual to find them marching along the extension cord. When I removed light switch plates, I found 10 - 20 dead carcasses. I also noticed that they fly towards lit light bulbs as well as any source of heat such as a heating vent, fireplace or sun-filled window. I physically removed them with the shop vac and then in the spring I sealed all the cracks and crevices I could see with insulating foam sealer. I did not live in the area last fall during their migration indoors, so I can't accurately compare the amount. *Amy Strahl, Worman's Mill*

I have more in the garden this year. They have destroyed my entire pepper crop but have been relatively lenient to the tomatoes. There have been 1 or 2 lesions per fruit at most. Many fruits are free of damage. They have not attacked cherry tomatoes at all. Most of my fruit (plums and peaches) was lost to a late frost. The apples have all been eaten by squirrels so I can't report on any BMSB damage.

The stink bugs congregated in my attic, garden shed and garage over the winter and I aggressively attacked them by setting off foggers there during the winter so very few emerged. The foggers worked well. There were large numbers of dead stink bugs (really dead, not playing possum) after the treatment.

Dan Kuebbing, Braddock Heights

I have not seen as many stinkbugs in our neighborhood (Damascus) as last year. I was talking to a couple of other people who had the same thoughts and we are not sure why (perhaps people know what to expect this year and are being aggressive in trying to get rid of them or perhaps the cold spell last winter killed

some or perhaps, as my employer has observed, toads and birds are now eating them). *Name withheld, Damascus*

Not too many more so far, but I noticed a large number lounging on the leaves of our purple leaf ash last weekend. Looks like they're waiting for their opportunity to invade. *Pat Hammett*

I think I have a few less than last year but I still catch about 20 or so a day. Last year I used to squash them. This year I just catch them and put them in a "pine-sol" bath. A great many, however, elude me so I have a great many coming out of hiding in the spring. I have found some of their hiding places so I hope to catch them before spring. My big problem is in the house. I have not noticed any damage to plants outside.

Elaine Feinberg, Ijamsville

BMSB 2011 report by Sarah Drenning:

Garden: at least half of our beautiful tomatoes were attacked and ruined by BMSB. Last year we didn't get any ripe tomatoes because of the drought -- only green ones that fell off the vines and were turned into green tomato pies. THIS YEAR the SMSBs covered and ruined at least half of the tomatoes that would have been beautiful ripe tomatoes. We did harvest those the bugs didn't infest.

FIX: In August I purchased a trap from Southern States and hung it on the fence that surrounds the garden. This worked and it attracted many bugs, but there were still many that preferred the tomatoes. At least those that were trapped will not be in our house this winter!

BMSB in the house: We had some in the house all winter and spring. They were dispatched one by one and drowned, but kept entering the house all winter long. They also congregated in the attic of our garage and died there. I swept up the dead ones by the dustpan full in the late spring.

Last year this time they were covering the walls of the brick garage, and then went inside. THIS YEAR, so far we've seen only a few there. Maybe because of the heavy rains we've had? I plan to hang a trap in the garage if they congregate there again.

The stinkbugs have started to gather on the wall of our garage, which is attached to the house. I'm trying to keep the garage door closed to limit their access, hopefully. I will be happy if they are fewer or even non-existent this winter! *Sarah Drenning, Woodsboro*

They seemed to show up at my house in Middletown at mid-day Monday, September 19, 2011. They have not seemed as numerous as last year. *John Huegelmeyer, Middletown*

Many of the folks I have been talking to at the Fair all say they aren't bad "yet" inside their homes. Growers and Farmers however tell a different story. Several said their Sweet corn crops have been devastated. One gentleman reported his squash crop was totally decimated - under his row cover the ground was "moving" from stink bugs.

Since last week I have drowned handfuls each morning. So far nothing like last year - although I would anticipate that as the weather gets colder more will make their way inside - but maybe I am wrong? Since the corn was planted late, I expect harvest to be late, and that is when I expect the biggest migration inside as their food source disappears. *Devra Boesch, Middletown*

No, I am not seeing many at all of the bugs trying to enter our home, as of yet. They almost totally ruined my tomato crop and some of my peppers. I tried a pheromone trap and it seemed partially effective. I also tried to shake the bugs off the vines and then sprayed the ground around the plants with Eight. Did not find that effective. Wonder if it is worth trying next year to plant a garden. *Clara VanDerLinden, Woodsboro, Md.*

Current stinkbug situation: Just got back from Northern Maine where it was cooler and no stinkbugs - just gnats and mosquitoes. Arriving home Saturday, the 24th, we were able to get into our house (around 5 pm) without bringing in any stinkbugs with us. I think the drizzle and gray skies may have helped with that. On

Sunday I killed about 60 stinkbugs that were trying to get into the house at the 3 entrances. Early in the summer I put out 4 traps by a company called Rescue. All four still have live stinkbugs in them along with many dead ones. I still haven't changed the attractant as I don't want to open the trap with the live ones still crawling around. I would say each trap has at least 100 stinkbugs.

A new phenomenon occurred this year (at least I didn't notice it last year), the stinkbugs have attacked my lilac. The adults hide under the leaves. I haven't sprayed any poisons as the lilac is next to our house and we have a dog that would concern me as well as the beneficial insects. We have a pair tree that they destroyed and grapes. I didn't do a vegetable garden out of concern about the stinkbugs from the horror stories I heard about.

My method of killing the insects has been to use a tissue to grab, squash, and discard in a killing jar. I also use the soapy bucket of water and a small paint brush to tap them into the soapy water. For those high on the wall I sweep them away with a broom and sometimes am able to get them as well. I see them climbing high on the outside heading for the vents in the attic. I can't do anything about that as the vents are about 28 feet high. Although the attic vent areas are screened I'm pretty sure they get in. I have noticed that they also find spaces under the wood siding to over winter. How they survive, I'm not sure. We don't open our windows in the fall. We will wait until the cold of winter to open windows and clean out the bugs that got through the storm windows.

During last winter we had some problem with them in the house if we turned the heat up to 70. Most of the winter (unless we had guests coming), we keep our home around 64 for stinkbug control and fuel costs. Early spring, March-May, they began to be a problem inside the house with them trying to get outside. They were attracted to any light source. We were killing 5-15 per day inside the house with the tissue, squishing, kill jar method.

I'm not sure if there are fewer bugs trying to get into the house this year. They are beginning to try entry into our vehicles getting into the window and door cracks. I can't remember how late into the fall last year they were a problem. Was it the entire month of October that I was fighting them? We will continue to be vigilant. Last fall we cleaned out our shed and garage and found and killed many. We will do the same again this year when the temperatures are low to make the killing easier.

Finally, I should explain that I my husband and I live in Loudoun County, Virginia. Our home is on 1.6 acres surrounded by horse and cattle farms, corn fields, soy bean fields, a pick your own fruit farm, and other homes on 5-25 acre lots. Frank Wolfe got approval for farmers in Virginia to spray a strong pesticide for stinkbug control. Although many of the farms in Loudoun County are organic, I think the ones closest to us are not. I thought that maybe that would lower the number of stinkbugs trying to invade our home, but I'm not so sure. Also, I'm not sure if/when any of the farms have/will spray that pesticide.

This is rather lengthy, but I wanted to be as complete as possible. It will be interesting to read what others have experienced. I do occasionally read the "I Hate Stinkbugs" facebook page to see what others are experiencing and to get tips on possible solutions. My sister-in-law in Burtonsville, MD, has been fighting a similar problem. We keep in touch to see what/if anything is working. No big solutions, just daily vigilance.

Paula Drewyer, Loudoun County, Virginia

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BMSB Tomato Damage Photo by Brian Biggins



BMSB on Pigweed - Photo by Brian Biggins



Wasp on BMSB - Photo by Brian Biggins