

The University of Maryland Extension Agriculture and Food Systems and Environment and Natural Resources Focus Teams proudly present this publication for commercial agronomic crop, vegetable and fruit industries.

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PEST ALERT: Kudzu Bugs Found in Maryland Soybeans

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For the first time ever, we have verified sightings of kudzu bug adults and egg masses on Maryland soybeans. The kudzu bugs were collected in Beltsville, Maryland. Prior to this report, kudzu bugs were never documented on Maryland soybeans, but common in kudzu patches in the southern half of Maryland. The mild winter may have allowed for increased survival, leading to high numbers in kudzu patches. Typically, we only see high numbers when we scout in the fall. Our previous research suggests this is a pest problem for both the current growing season and next year. If kudzu bugs successfully overwinter in areas adjacent to soybean fields, the bugs may invade fields regrown with soybean next year. The bug may infest snap bean fields as well as soybeans. We recommend growers use an insect sweep net to frequently scout for kudzu bugs during the remainder of this year. The bugs are typically found near edges of fields. The threshold for spraying is currently set at one immature per sweep. Without a net, growers can look at the stems of plants, focusing particularly on leaf nodes. Large populations of kudzu bugs also often produce a distinct odor (kudzu bugs smell similar to stink bugs). Removal of kudzu patches and other overwintering sites near soybean fields can help to reduce migration of kudzu bugs from these areas. If kudzu bug numbers exceed the economic threshold (one immature per sweep) and plants appear stressed, an insecticide may be necessary. Applying insecticide should be limited as it may increase outbreaks of other pest species or decrease natural predators. All insecticides rated for soybean use are effective on kudzu bugs. For more information about the kudzu bug in Maryland, visit our website: <http://mdkudzubug.org/>. If you observe kudzu bugs in your field, please contact us at: <http://mdkudzubug.org/contact-us/>.

Crop News Alert

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