

## Thrips—"An Unnoticed Problem" on Impatiens in Connecticut

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**T**hrips are difficult to detect in greenhouse crops. When visiting a greenhouse recently, thrips were identified as a problem on impatiens in hanging baskets.

The symptom noticed by the grower was a thinning and wilting of the plants on one side of the basket. Upon close examination, the stems were black at the leaf axils and on sections of the stem. When a cross-section of the stem was cut, a black epidermis with a green center was observed. The veins exhibited raised bumps and the thrips were detected under the microscope in flowers and on leaves.

Some tips to aid in detection of thrips are:

1. Hang yellow or blue colored sticky traps in the crop to monitor thrips populations.

2. To examine the plant, select a branch with flowers and place them in a white styrofoam coffee cup, cover the top and shake vigorously. The thrips should be crawling in the bottom of the cup.

Tomato spotted wilt virus caused by thrips feeding caused the symptom described above. Thrips can also stunt the plant, making it unsalable.

Early detection of thrips on plants is the best control measure. If they are found, select at least two insecticides to be applied on a rotating basis to avoid resistance.

When spraying, use short intervals between sprays (approximately three days) for three applications then stop and monitor populations again. Repeat applications if thrips persist.

Failures usually occur if complete coverage of the plant is not achieved.

Sugar (1 to 1 1/2 pound to 100 gallons of water or 1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons per gallon of water) will reportedly increase the effectiveness of the spray.

Thrips can be controlled if detected early. (See article on thrips in this newsletter.) If you need assistance, contact your Extension Educator.

**Sources:** Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Onondaga County, New York.

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