Introduction

The Manitoba weekly vegetable report is a multimedia web based report published weekly during the growing season (May until October, and in many cases storage problems) by MAFRI. It compiles the results of the weekly scouting program of commercial vegetable fields in Manitoba. Reports from carrots, onions, cucurbits, cole crops, sweet corn, cabbage, potatoes, and other crops (tomatoes, red beets, parsnips, and peppers) are made weekly throughout the growing season to inform producers of what developments in pest and disease pathogens are occurring within Manitoba fields near Winkler, Portage la Prairie, and Otterburne. Though developed for commercial producers, the report can be accessed on the web by anyone at http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/mvvr/

The report incorporates text, audio files, numerous photographs, and the occasional video to assist in the education of producers and decision makers in Manitoba’s vegetable industry.

Vegetable Scouting Locations

The vegetable scouting program is centered around three centres, Winkler, Portage la Prairie (including Delta, MB), and Otterburne (see map below). In 2008, the Winkler scouting area consisted of three fields for a total of approximately 80 ha (200 acres).

In the Portage la Prairie region consisted of five carrot fields of approximately 125ha (300 acres), two sweet corn fields of approximately 22 ha (50 acres), one red beet field of about 15 acres, 2 ha (5 acres) of pumpkin and cucumber, 20 ha (50 acres) of cabbage, 20 ha (50 acres of cauliflower) and 16 ha (40 acres) of onions.

The Otterburne area, scouted for the first time this year, added 20 ha (50 acres) of sweet corn, 8 ha (20 acres) of cabbage, and 2 ha (4 acres) of cucumber.

Carrots

This year provided a distinct contrast to the 2007 growing season (May until October, and in many cases storage problems) by MAFRI. It was largely non-existent in 2008. In terms of a general summary, populations were extremely low for the season. We did see a single adult of the striped cucumber beetle (fig. 4), and as a result there was little aster yellows observed. After the significant population of 2007, the minimal populations of 2008 give strong evidence that while we aren’t seeing anything locally, other regions may have much higher populations.

Cucurbits

Unlike 2007, cucumber beetles, both striped and spotted (fig. 8), were largely absent. MAFRI is not aware of any problems with cucumber beetles in 2008. Plasticulture film was found over several cucumber beds (fig. 9), but that was it. Population patterns of the cucumber beetle varied from region to region, so while we did not see them in our scouted fields, they may have been present in other areas in the province.

Sweet Corn

Northern Corn Leaf Blight (Exserohilum turcicum) and Northern Corn Leaf Spot (Cochliobolus carbonum) were first observed on July 4th, 2008, in Portage la Prairie, and the week of July 18th in the Beausejour and St. Barnabas areas. Northern Corn Leaf Blight (fig. 10) was observed on plants in Otterburne the week of July 21st. In both Portage la Prairie and Otterburne, the symptoms appeared on a large number of plants, though the severity remained low. After July, new symptoms were of low frequency and severity, and the threat associated with this disease diminished (the disease has the potential to cause extensive damage after flowering).

Beans

The only significant issue for cole crops this year in most fields was flea beetles (fig. 12). Populations were tremendously high early in the season but as we saw each year, once the carrot has been harvested, feeding populations can be quite high in later cole crops. In general populations could be classified as moderate.

Onions

In some onion fields, the numbers of thrips were well below the economic threshold throughout the growing season. In stored onions, samples with blue mold (caused by species of Penicillium) were found (fig. 29). This is known as a normal pathogen, but can cause problems on non-wounded bulbs as well. Once this fungus reaches the succulent bulb tissue, the fungus can rapidly degrade the onion. It is unclear how widespread the problem is.

Asparagus

We did manage to find some Asparagus beetles (fig. 7) this year, something rather unusual for us. We wouldn’t consider them to be a problem, rather more of a curiosity than anything else, but they do make for good pictures. They can cause economic damage, but for the most part are remarkably easy to manage.

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