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Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived in Kentucky

The spotted lanternfly (aka SLF) is the newest invasive species that has found its way to the Bluegrass State. In early October, a homeowner in Gallatin County noticed the adult form of this insect on their property and worked with their local county Extension agent to submit photos to reportapest@uky.edu. Thanks to this, the Kentucky Office of the State Entomologist was able to visit the site and collect specimens to submit for federal confirmation, officially certifying an infestation. Thus far, no other county has reported lanternflies. As with all invasive species, the spotted lanternfly causes trouble in the areas that they move in to, and Kentuckians should expect to see this pest more frequently in the coming years.



Figure 1: Adult spotted lanternflies are distinct looking insects; their fore wings are half spotted and half reticulated, while the back wings are a mixture of black, white, and red. On the left, the wings are open and showing all of the color; on the right is how the insect is most likely to be encountered— with the wings closed over its back (Photos: Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org).

What is the Spotted Lanternfly?

SLF is very distinctive in appearance; the adult is about an inch long, with strikingly patterned forewings that mixes spots with stripes. The back wings are contrasting red, black, and white. The immature stages are black with white spots and develop red patches as they age. They are a type of planthopper; they are capable of jumping and can be quite fast.

Spotted lanternflies develop through a process called incomplete metamorphosis. This means that the female lays eggs, which will hatch to reveal “nymphs,” immature insects that vaguely resemble the adult. They gradually get larger during the growing season, eventually developing their wings and becoming adults. SLF starts off black with white dots, and then before becoming adults, develop red markings.

How did it get to Kentucky?

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November To Do's

*When the ground freezes mound soil or mulch over the bud union of your roses to keep them from freezing out. This isn't necessary if you have roses on their own root meaning they weren't grafted.

*Apply 3 inches of mulch to your perennial bed after the ground freezes to prevent them from heaving out of the ground when it freezes and thaws.

*Plant any spring flowering hardy bulbs now.

*Extend harvest of cool season vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, radish, turnip, beet, lettuce, spinach, etc. by covering them with remay fabric or tobacco canvas.

*Cut back asparagus tops after they have frozen back. Apply a fresh layer of mulch after the ground has frozen.

*It's not too late to plant a cover crop of winter wheat or rye.

*Discard and compost any vegetable plant material. Use the compost on the flower garden if you aren't sure you have a hot compost pile. This way you won't risk introducing insects and disease next year.





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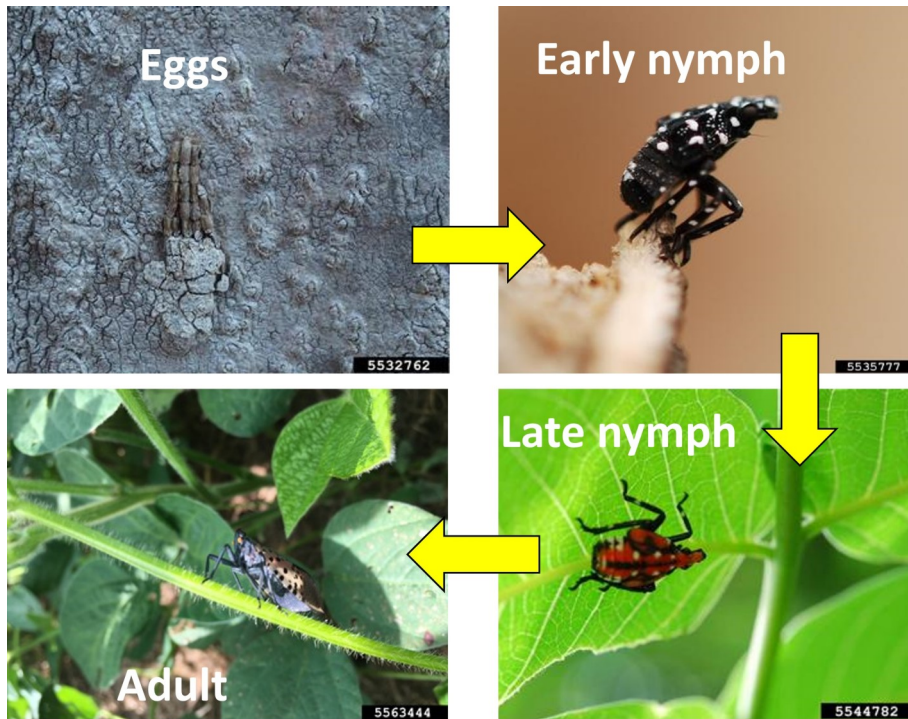
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Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived in Kentucky



The spotted lanternfly is a non-native insect that is from East Asia. The first confirmed infestations were found in Pennsylvania in 2014. Following that discovery, the pest has steadily made progress in infesting other states, such as New Jersey, Ohio, Delaware, New York, Connecticut, Maryland, and West Virginia. In 2021, an infestation was confirmed in Switzerland County, Indiana (directly across the Ohio River from Gallatin County, Kentucky). Further movement in Indiana has been confirmed in 2022 and 2023. In 2022, there was also confirmation of SLF in Cincinnati, OH, with the problem growing in 2023.

In late summer of this year, sites of SLF were confirmed in Illinois and Tennessee, as well. Just when it seemed that the insect might be in every state that touches Kentucky (but not actually in Kentucky),

the local infestation was also discovered. Thus far, the number of insects discovered in Kentucky doesn't rival the infestations you might see images of online or in news reports from states in New England. It is possible that the Gallatin County population arrived via natural movement from Indiana. SLF can jump and fly, and their natural spread can take them 3 to 4 miles from an infested site in a given year. It is also possible that they were accidentally brought into the state on infested goods or on a car, truck, or other means of transport.

What do I do?

This pest is known to feed on more than 70 plant species, including specialty crops like grapes, apples, peaches, and hops, as well as trees such as maple and black walnut amongst other hardwoods, and fruit crops. Their preferred host for a portion of their life cycle is the tree of heaven (another non-native/invasive species). SLF is classified as a true bug, part of the order Hemiptera. They feed using piercing sucking mouthparts. As they feed, they excrete honeydew, a sugary fecal material that accumulates on nearby plants and surfaces and can at-



Figure 3: Spotted lanternflies feed on tender growth as nymphs before moving on to feed on the trunk and branches of trees as these bugs get larger and stronger (Photo by Emelie Swackhamer, Penn State University, Bugwood.org).

Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived in Kentucky



Figure 4: A mass of spotted lanternfly eggs has been laid on this vehicle. The eggs will hatch the following spring if not removed (Photo courtesy of WPMT Fox)



Figure 5: Be on the lookout for the weird looking adults and for the egg masses spackled onto surfaces, as seen here. Don't bring home any unwanted hitchhikers and help us by reporting odd sightings! (Photo by Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org)

tract black sooty mold fungi. Honeydew can also be slippery for people and unfortunately can attract stinging insects looking to feed on it. Another unique problem is that beekeepers near SLF infestations report that their bees will forage so heavily on the honeydew that they end up with honey made from SLF fecal material rather than nectar.

Finally, females lay their eggs on natural and unnatural surfaces alike. Eggs are being laid right now as autumn settles in, and they will overwinter in that stage. While they use trees, the cryptic and hard-to-see egg cases have also been found on automobiles, trains, lawn furniture, firewood, stones, and many other substrates. It's possible that Kentuckians who travel to Gallatin County or to Cincinnati, OH could pick up hitchhiking female lanternflies that will come back to un-infested parts of Kentucky and lay eggs there.

What can you do to help?

Kentuckians should be on the lookout for this pest. Report suspicious looking bugs and egg cases to the Office of the State Entomologist at reportapest@uky.edu. When making a report, please include an image or a sample of the suspect, otherwise it will be difficult to confirm the problem. It is also important to include geographic information. It is true that this is a difficult pest to eliminate, but with the help of citizens monitoring for populations, there is hope that their spread can be slowed to allow communities more time to prepare.



Plant of The Month-Holiday Cacti

Holiday cactus is native to the South American jungles. The flowers bloom once a year and come in shades of fuchsia, yellow, salmon, pink, white, orange, red and sometimes will even have a combination of the colors. Holiday cacti are tropical plants. They require sunlight and the blooms last longer with cooler temperatures. Keep them away from heaters, fireplaces, radiators, furnace ducts, and other heat sources. Place in a sunny location while indoors and if outdoors during the summer, find a place that has a sun/shade mix to prevent the plant from getting burned.

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November Recipe Of The Month



Pumpkin Apple Muffins

1¼ cups all-purpose flour	½ teaspoon ground ginger	1½ cups fresh pureed pumpkin
1¼ cups whole-wheat flour	½ teaspoon ground nutmeg	½ cup canola oil
1¼ teaspoons baking soda	1½ cups honey	2 cups Granny Smith apples, finely chopped
½ teaspoon salt	2 large eggs	
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon		

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a large bowl, **combine** flours, baking soda, salt and spices. In a small bowl, **combine** honey, eggs, pumpkin and oil; **stir** into dry ingredients just until moistened.

Fold in apples. **Fill** greased or paper lined muffin cups, two-thirds full. **Bake** for 25 to 30 minutes or until muffins test done. **Cool** for 10 minutes before removing from pan.

Note: Can substitute two cups granulated sugar for honey, decrease baking soda by ¼ teaspoon and increase oven temperature to 350 degrees F.

Yield: 18 muffins

Nutritional Analysis: 200 calories, 7 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 35 mg cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 35 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 20 g sugar, 3 g protein



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.