Reduce Risk Strategies for Cabbage Maggot Control

LEAD RESEARCHER

Renee Priya Prasad
Associate professor and
department head for agriculture
at the University of the Fraser Valley

Crucifers (crops in the cabbage family) provide numerous opportunities for Canadian vegetable growers but are under attack by cabbage root maggots. In this research activity, the team has been working to find new management tools to allow growers to see decreased crop losses from cabbage root maggot.

The research team has found the tools tested provide reduction in root maggot damage on roots for three weeks in earlier plantings of brassica crops. As plantings go later in the season, pest pressure increases with no reductions in damage compared to the untreated control.

Field samples are being collected to see how many parasitoids of *Delia radicum* are present in the different treatments.

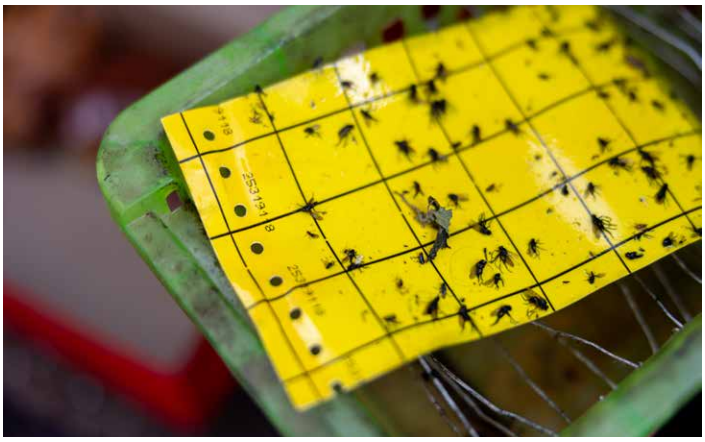
Preliminary data is suggesting that the levels of parasitism are similar in treatment plots and control plots. This is good news for producers as it's beneficial to have the natural enemies protected for control of subsequent generations of a pest.

For the 2026 growing season, the research team is planning to repeat chemical control trials and considering a trial in another part of Canada. For the British Columbia trials this will be the third year of data.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Tools tested provide reduction in root maggot damage on roots for three weeks in earlier plantings of brassica crops.
  - With later season plantings, pest pressure increases with no reductions in damage compared to the untreated control.
- Preliminary data is showing that the levels of parasitism are similar in treatment plots and control plots.

Cabbage root maggot field plot trials at Abbotsford, B.C. Photo: Toban Dyck



A test strip with cabbage root maggots on it. Photo: Toban Dyck

Cabbage plant plots at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Agassiz Research and Development Centre. Photo: Toban Dyck