Squash Bug

Anasa tristis

Hemiptera: Coreidae
They emerge in spring prior to the emergence of pumpkin and squash crops. Adults are the wintering form. Between seasons they find refuge in the vicinity of the field of infested during the previous year.
Squash bug eggs are laid in small clusters
Eggs may be laid on leaves, stems and even flowers.
At egg hatch the nymphs are usually greenish.

Older nymphs are gray or gray green.

Photograph courtesy of Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska.
Early stage nymphs are generally grayish or grayish-green.
Molting of a squash bug nymph
Wing pads become increasingly visible on late stages.
A second, usually much larger, generation occurs in mid-late summer.
Feeding is done in a "lacerate and flush" manner that kills cells at the feeding site.
Massed feeding on stems can produce plant collapse
Later in the season they concentrate more on fruit and produce wounds on the fruit surface.
Gumming at squash bug feeding wounds on zucchini
Fruit scarring of the skin of a kabocha squash
Mild winter temperatures allow squash bug to occur over a broader area.

Severity of squash bug outbreaks is often inversely correlated with the severity of the previous winter.
Squash Bug Controls

• Cultural Controls
  – Delay planting to avoid generation I
  – Hand crush egg masses
  – Avoid use of mulches
  – Destroy crop residues

• Chemical Controls
  – Treat when egg masses first detected
  – Concentrate treatments around plant base
Consider destroying eggs by hand in small plantings
Planting later in the season – early to mid-June – can avoid crops from becoming colonized by the overwintered squash bugs.
Mulches *are not* a good idea where squash bug is a problem.
Destroy remaining fruit after harvest to prevent late stage nymphs from completing development.
Squash Bug Treatment Timing

Insecticide treatments should be done early in the year

Suggested applications are made at first appearance of eggs and about 2 weeks later
Squash Bug Treatment Area

Direct treatments around the base of the plant

Squash bugs seek shelter around the base of the plant during hot weather
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