

## Rice Root Aphid

**Rice root aphid** (*Rhopalosiphum rufiabdominalis*) is a dark olive-green insect with a generally round body form. Wingless stages develop on roots and they survive on plants grown both in soil and in hydroponic culture. Winged stages periodically emerge from soil to fly to new plants; these are most often observed when they have been trapped by the hairs on the upper surfaces of leaves.

Rice root aphid has so far only been found associated with indoor Cannabis production. However, rice root aphid is well-known as an aphid that can be found year-round outdoors in much of North America. This aphid has a wide host range, but is most often associated with the roots of various grasses, including wheat and barley. Infestation of *Cannabis* plants can occur if plants are taken outdoors and exposed to colonizing by winged forms of the aphid; winged forms of this may enter vents and other openings. Year-round reproduction can occur within indoor growing facilities growing hemp.

Reproduction by rice root aphids is entirely asexual; no males are produced and females give live birth to genetically identical daughter aphids. They develop rapidly and will mature in about 9-10 days. The adults can live for about a month during which time they can produce several new daughters each day. At 73°F, an optimal temperature, rice root aphid populations can double every 1.6 days.



**(Top) Wingless rice root aphids at base of rice plant. (Bottom) Winged rice root aphids trapped on Cannabis leaf.**

Hemiptera: Aphididae



**(Top) Rice root aphid developing on roots of Cannabis in hydroponic system. (Bottom) Rice root aphids in soil of rice plant. The aphids are in a dense colony that appears a lighter in the lower part of the picture. Photograph courtesy of Emily Luna.**