

Squash Bugs

No gardener has much tolerance for them: squash bugs. You know the ones. Grey. Hard, shield-shaped back. They're the ones that feed on your squash and pumpkin plants, resulting in unhealthy plants and loss of production.

By the time you recognize the presence of the adults, they are almost impossible to control. That means it's time to scout.

While the recent confirmation of the presence of first generation eggs and nymphs may not mean much now, the second generation they create is often the one that wreaks havoc on the squash family plants in your garden. Identification and control are key.

The eggs are brick-red in color. The nymph stage will be a small green insect with black legs. Both will be found on the *back* side of the leaves, so look closely to find them.

Implementing a control program now can be a huge deterrent to bigger problems later. Insecticides must come in direct contact with the insect to be effective, meaning you must spray/dust the underside of the leaves. Products like permethrin, malathion, and methoxychlor provide control if a direct application is made to young, soft-bodied squash bugs.

Want more information about squash bugs and their control? Check out Squash Bugs from the KSU Home and Horticulture Pest series, available from any of our three District Offices or online at

<https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3308.pdf> . A list of common homeowner products is also available upon request.