



Healthy sweetpotatoes

Managing Sweetpotato Weevils

Follow these guidelines to reduce losses from sweetpotato weevils



Productive sweetpotato farm

The Pest



Weevil-infested sweetpotatoes



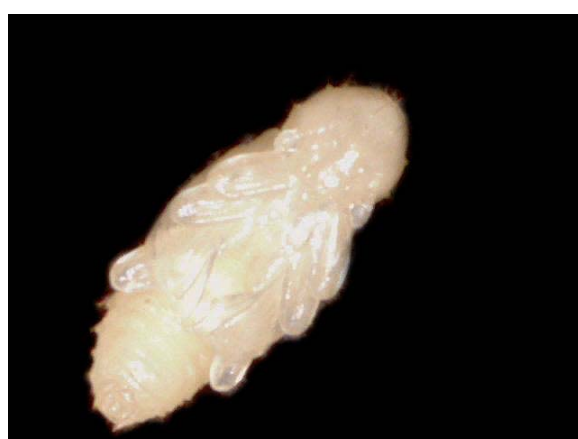
Sweetpotato weevil



West Indian weevil



Weevil larva



Weevil pupa



Use a hand lens to identify weevils in the field.



Weevil entry hole on stem.

After hatching from the egg, the weevil larva enters the stem near the soil line.

Management Problems

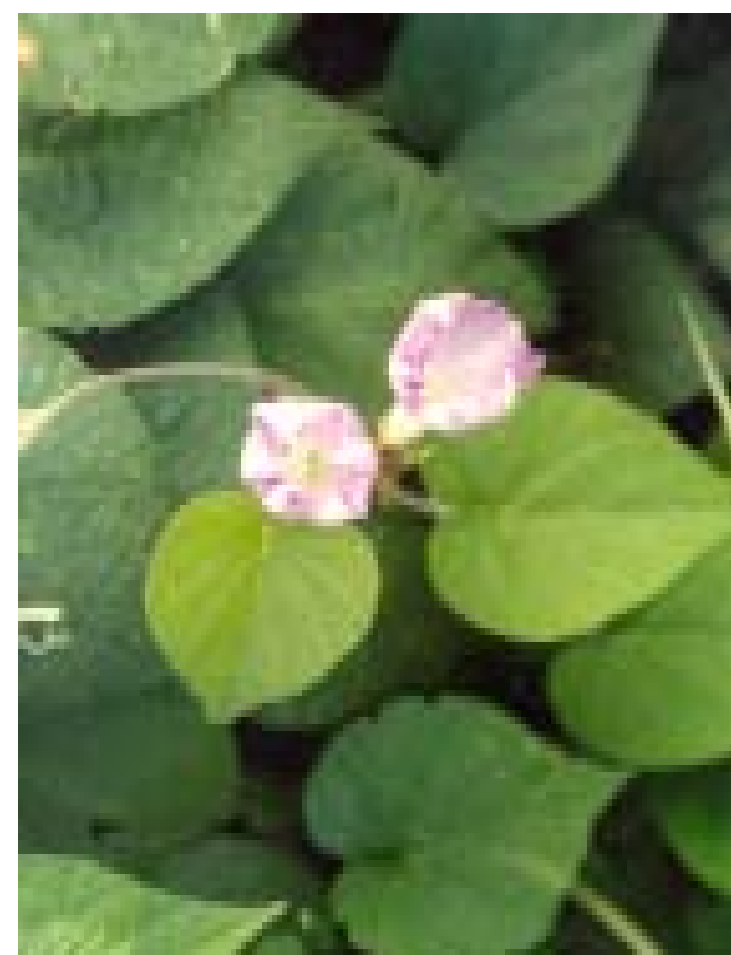
Before planting

Old and abandoned sweetpotato fields provide breeding sites for weevils. Buried sweetpotatoes will sprout and provide breeding sites for weevils.



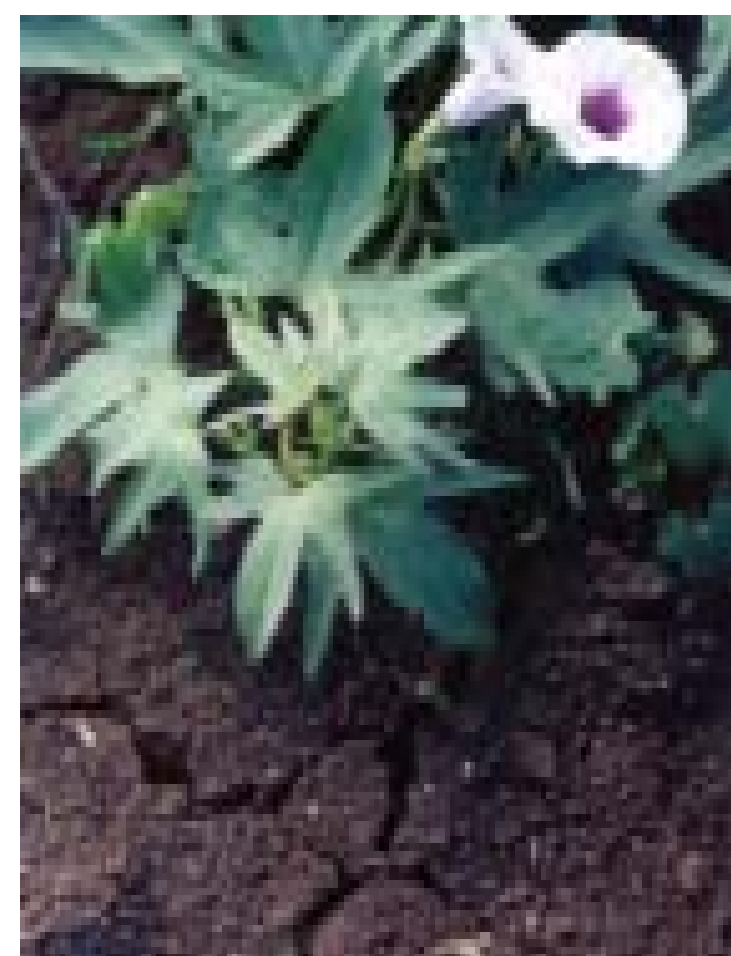
Early crop

Sweetpotato weevils can breed in morning glory.



Mature crop

Weevils will attack sweetpotato through cracks in the soil.



Management Solutions

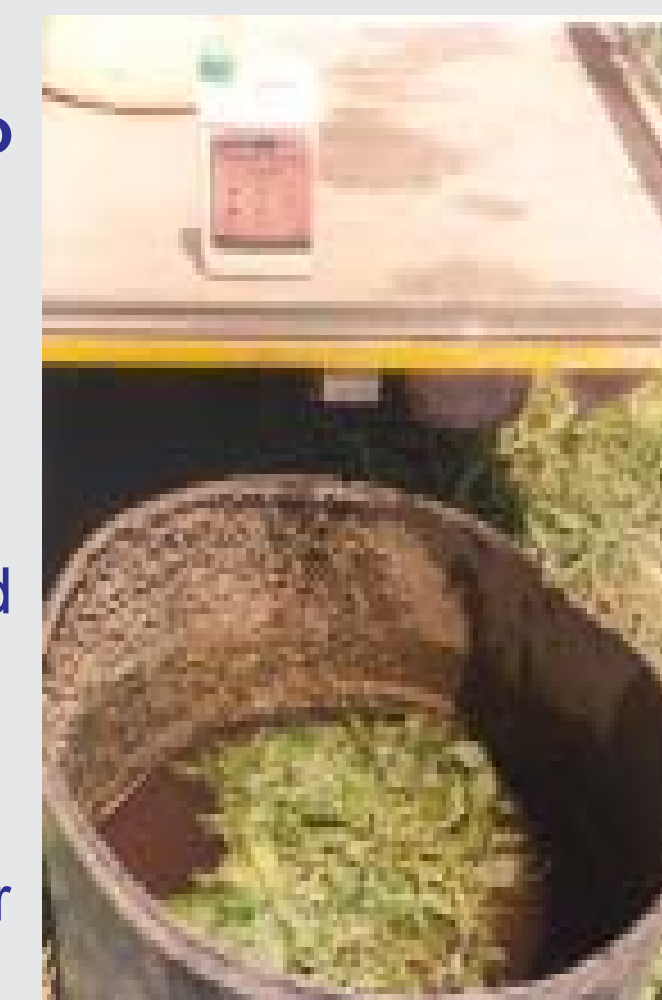
1 Destroy breeding sites. This is the most important part of sweetpotato weevil management!

After harvest, sweetpotato vines and tubers should be disked, burned or fed to livestock.

Sweetpotato should be rotated with other crops to reduce the build-up of weevils and other sweetpotato pests.



2 Treat sweetpotato cuttings with an appropriate insecticide before planting. Younger cuttings are less likely to be infested than cuttings from older plants. Contact your extension agent for information on the legal, safe, and effective use of pesticides.



3 Destroy morning glory growing in and around sweetpotato fields. Weeds can be removed manually or by applying an appropriate herbicide.



4 Use pheromone traps to monitor sweetpotato weevils. These traps will help you know when weevils are present in your area.



5 Close cracks in the soil to prevent weevil access.

Hilling buries sweetpotatoes deeper in the soil, making tubers less accessible to weevils.



6 Harvest your sweetpotato crop all at once. Weevils will lay eggs in sweetpotatoes left to be harvested later.

