

Grasshoppers are back, here's what to do

By: Jake Hadfield & Matti Leak

As the weather heats up, so does the grasshopper population. Experts are anticipating a large grasshopper population in the valley this year. Grasshopper populations are cyclical and tend to have large numbers every 8-10 years. Sadly, we are falling within this 8-10 year mark right now. Fortunately, there are several things you can do to help combat these pests.

Two keys to controlling grasshoppers are to treat as broad of an area as possible when you first see grasshoppers and to treat grasshoppers while they are young and in the nymph stage. These two keys will help you have the most effective control possible. Treating the perimeter of your property while grasshoppers are young can be one of the best places to start. Once grasshoppers develop wings they become almost impossible to control.

Keep in mind that it is best to administer treatment as early as possible, while grasshoppers are still in the nymph stage. Grasshoppers do not develop wings until they are adults, and while they are in the nymph stage they are not as mobile. When they develop wings they do not stay in one area long enough for insecticides to work.

Mowing a wide swath around your property can help eliminate the migration of nymphs into your crops, garden, or lawn. There are three common chemical methods that can be used to eliminate grasshoppers: bait, dusts, and sprays. Bait can be spread across a field, lawn, or garden, and targets grasshoppers and other foraging insects. Bait must be reapplied frequently and immediately following rain or irrigation in order to be effective. Dusting is another method that will eliminate grasshoppers but is a more intense procedure. It will not stick to forages as well and needs to be applied quite frequently in order to be effective. Carbaryl is the only type of dust that is approved for home application. Sprays are the most affordable method for eliminating grasshoppers but do require special equipment. Sprays will stick to plant material and kill grasshoppers on contact.

The next couple of weeks is the time to act to prevent the spread of grasshoppers throughout the County. Please remember while using these methods to read the instructions and labels when dealing with insecticides.

Additionally, if there are any sightings of Mormon crickets within the County, please let Juab County Extension know as soon as possible.

For more information, please contact the Extension Office at (435) 623-3450 or email Jacob.hadfield@usu.edu.