Rice hispa

Recognize the problem
The female rice hispa lays single eggs towards the tip on the ventral surface of rice leaves. The hatched yellow larvae immediately burrow into the leaf tissues, tunnelling and scraping the upper surface of leaf blades, leaving only the lower epidermis as white streaks parallel to the midrib. Translucent white patches that are parallel to the leaf veins form. When severely attacked, the leaves turn yellow and wither, resulting in damaged leaves. Growth may be greatly delayed.

Background
Direct seeding which result in close spacing causes greater leaf densities that favour the build-up of the rice hispa. The presence of grassy weeds in and near rice fields act as alternate hosts also harbour and encourage the pest to develop. A heavily fertilized field also encourages the damage. Heavy rains, especially in pre-monsoon or early monsoon periods, followed by abnormally low precipitation, minimum day-night temperature differentials for a number of days, and high humidity are favourable for the insect’s population built up.

Management
• A cultural control method that is recommended for the rice hispa is to avoid over fertilizing the field with nitrogen
• Carry out transplanting with wider spacing or reduce seeding rate for direct sowing so as to give wider spacing. Close plant spacing results in greater leaf densities that can encourage higher hispa numbers.
• To prevent egg laying of the pests, the shoot tips can be cut.
• Clipping the tips of newly infested leaves and burying it in the mud can reduce grub populations by 75-92%.
• Among the biological control agents, there are small wasps that attack the eggs and larvae, so delay spraying of insecticides. A reduviid bug eats up the adults. There are three fungal pathogens that attack the adults. Check with local officer for availability of fungal pathogens.
• Spray insecticide when heavy damage or outbreak occurs

Ref: IRRI Knowledge Bank

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > Dicladispa armiger

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Cambodia