

# Sweet potato weevil

*Cylas formicarius*, *C. bruneus* Fukusi wa viazi vitamu in Swahili



6 to 8 mm sweet potato weevil adult (Photo by www.whatsthatbug.com)



5 mm larva inside tuber (Photo by Peter A.C. Ooi CABI)



Feeding damage of sweet potato weevil (Photo by NAFIS Kenya)

Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant uninfected clean tender vine tips (not the older parts) from uninfected fields. Avoid using tubers for planting as they may contain weevil larvae.</li> <li>Establish a nursery in an un-infected plot as a source of clean planting material.</li> <li>Dip planting material into a pesticide before planting (see yellow column)</li> <li>Use deep-rooted tolerant varieties such as Simama, Sinia, Mavuno, Ukerwe, Vumilia and others.</li> <li>Plant early in the main cropping season to give enough time for the crop to mature before dry period.</li> <li>Close soil cracks in the mounds by hoeing or earthing up around the base of the plants to stop the weevil entering soil to lay eggs or feed on tubers</li> <li>Harvest 3 months after planting to avoid cracks in dry soil where the weevils enter.</li> <li>Plant barrier crops around field, such as banana or cassava.</li> <li>Remove alternative hosts of weevils such as wild Ipomoea.</li> <li>Clean up all remains of the old crop, particularly infested vines and tubers, and destroy them e.g. by feeding to livestock. Do not bury remains as weevils can still survive.</li> <li>Do not store the remains near fields</li> <li>Rotate sweet potatoes 2-3 seasons with maize, pulse, or legumes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly check field for open soil cracks, about twice per month.</li> <li>The weevil adult is 6 - 8 mm long and has a long pointed mouth. It is black with a small red-brownish part, and can fly.</li> <li>Look for 1 to 5 mm long larvae that feed inside the tubers and make tunnels and holes.</li> <li>Monitoring of larvae and adults is very difficult.</li> <li>Pheromone traps might be used to capture male adults (2 traps/acre) or light traps, to detect presence of weevils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Larvae and pupae are hidden inside the tubers and adults hide most of their life inside the soil or tubers so cannot be reached by pesticides.</li> <li>Spraying insecticide on the ground is not effective because the chemical will not move into the soil to kill the weevils</li> <li>Wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label.</li> <li>WHO class II (and Tanzanian red and yellow-label products) are not advised in Tanzania. Farmers are not allowed to buy or use WHO class II products without special permits and training.</li> <li>Always consult recent list of registered pesticides (MAFC / TPRI).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WHO toxicity class II (moderately hazardous). High risk to bees, very toxic to aquatic organisms. Do not consume treated tubers and do not feed to livestock.</li> </ul>



## Tanzania

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