## Red-banded thrips on cashew

_Selenothrips rubrocinctus_

### Prevention

- Thrips are tiny insects that cause damage to crop plants by feeding on the surface of the leaves and fruits.
- Establish windbreaks before orchard planting.
- Maintain good cultural practices to increase plant vigour and enhance plant tolerance to thrip damage (sufficient fertilizer application, pruning, plant spacing etc.).
- Keep the soil well irrigated, avoid excessive application of nitrogen fertilizers which may promote thrip populations.
- Conserve natural enemies of _S. rubrocinctus_ such as spiders, predatory mites, lacewings and predatory bugs (e.g. minute pirate bug) by avoiding the use of broad spectrum insecticides.
- Prune trees to allow lighter conditions within the orchard (unfavourable conditions for thrips).

### Monitoring

- Plant parts attacked first show chlorotic spots and later turn to a silvery coloration.
- Weekly, shake foliage/flowers over a white tray and observe for presence of nymphs with red bands on abdomen and black, elongated bodied adults.
- Take note of clustered fruit, as low infestation levels show thrip preference to feed between clustered fruit rather than single fruit.
- Sticky blue traps can be used to monitor the presence of thrips.
- Observe plants for sooty mould, a symptom of thrip infestation.
- Population numbers are higher during the dry season and severe attacks can result in premature leaf drop, the inflorescences drying and the pseudofruit can even crack.
- Take direct control actions before silvery leaves turn brown/ appear burnt or when 4-6 adults are found per flower.

### Direct Control

- Use pheromone lures in mass trappings, add a contaminant to kill trapped thrips.
- Use of neem based products e.g. neem seed oil extract and Buprofezin or neem oil soap spray (check product label for dosage or 3 tablespoons of liquid soap per litre of water).
- Use of biological pesticides e.g. _Metarhizium anisopliae_ or _Beauveria bassiana_ and follow instructions and dosage on the labels.

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**Note:** Pesticides may be available to control this pest. Please check with the Ministry of Agriculture in your country to find out which pesticides are registered in your country and the local restrictions for their use.