

# Cotton aphid

*Aphis gossypii*



Adult cotton aphid (Jim Baker, North Carolina State University, Bugwood.org)



Infestation of *A. gossypii* (Mohammed El Damir, Bugwood.org)

Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotate planting of cotton with onion or maize. Be sure not to plant alternate hosts such as cucumber or tomato.</li> <li>• Use of resistant varieties. Contact local extension officer of agro-dealer for locally available varieties.</li> <li>• Avoid the use of broad spectrum insecticides to conserve natural pest species such as ladybird beetles, lacewings and parasitoids.</li> <li>• Top the plants following boll opening to remove the upper leaves where aphids primarily feed. This reduces infestation on lower areas of the plant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively monitor crops for symptoms of infestation and aphid presence by eye and using a hand lens.</li> <li>• Symptoms of aphid infestation include yellowing and curling of leaves. Stunted growth and distortion of plant stems.</li> <li>• A characteristic feature of infestation is the presence of black sooty mould growing on the honeydew secretion from aphids.</li> <li>• Adults are 2 mm long, with black heads and yellow/green bodied.</li> <li>• Nymphs are pale yellow/green, roughly 1-1.5 mm long.</li> <li>• Consider direct control actions if more than 5 aphids are found per plant when 20 are surveyed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a strong jet of water, wash aphids off the underside of leaves during early and low infestations roughly once a week.</li> <li>• Prune heavily infested plant parts and destroy by burning.</li> <li>• Control ant populations, as ants are associated with aphids due to their honeydew secretions and protect aphids from natural enemies. Use a band of sticky tape around the base of plants to trap ants.</li> <li>• Use of neem extract (50 g neem seed cake per litre of water and 2 tablespoons of liquid soap). Spray no more than twice per season.</li> <li>• Use of liquid soap solution (10 ml liquid soap, 85 g chopped/ground garlic, 1 litre of water and 50 ml of vegetable oil). Add 2 litres of water to the solution before use then spray.</li> </ul>

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.