





# Technical Bulletin for: **SWEET POTATO WEEVIL**

*Cylas formicarius* () • Coleoptera, Curculionidae • CLYFOR



<b>DISTRIBUTION</b>	Widely distributed throughout tropical regions of the world. Also found in the coastal plain of the southeastern United States from Texas to North Carolina, in Hawaii and Puerto Rico.
<b>HOSTS</b>	Sweet potato is the primary cultivated host. Native plants, such as Railroad Vine and Morning glory, can be important hosts also.
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	
<b>Adult Moth</b>	About ¼ in. (6 mm) long, with long thin shiny body, legs and head, giving it an ant like appearance. The head is black, the antennae, thorax and legs orange to reddish brown, and the abdomen metallic blue. The slightly curved snout is about as long as the thorax with a layer of short hairs. Secretive and feign death if disturbed. The pupa is similar in appearance to the adult.
<b>Larvae</b>	Dirty white to gray, legless with a yellow-brown head, about ⅜ in. (9 mm) at maturity.
<b>Eggs</b>	White to pale yellow, oval, about ¼ in. (0.6 mm) long.
<b>LIFE HISTORY</b>	Beetles become active in the field as soon as host plants are available. As stalks enlarge and become woody, adult females prepare to deposit eggs. They lay the eggs in holes in stems and roots near the soil surface. Each female produce 75 to 90 eggs over 30 days. Larvae hatch less than a week after eggs are laid. They burrow deep into stems and fleshy roots for about 2 to 3 weeks. At the end of this period, third instar larvae return to the plant surface nearest the soil line to pupate. Pupae transform into adults in about a week, but another 4 days often elapse before the new beetles emerge from their pupal cells. Adults live about 1 to 3 months in summer and up to 8 months in winter. Sweet potato weevils continue to feed and breed throughout winter in stored sweet potatoes. As many as 8 generations may be produced each year.

## MONITORING INFORMATION

<b>LURE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS, SUBSTRATE &amp; FIELD LIFE</b>	(Z)-3-Dodecenyl (E)-2-butenate on a red septum. Lure longevity: Four (4) weeks. 
<b>TRAP TO USE</b>	UNI-trap (green, yellow or mixed) 
<b>MONITORING STRATEGY</b>	Place traps equal to or slightly above the height of the plants. Weevils respond to low concentrations of pheromone and will move up to 920 ft. (280 m) to a pheromone source. Check with your local Cooperative Extension or Master Gardener for local information and recommendations.
<b>CULTURAL &amp; PHYSICAL CONTROL</b>	Sanitation is particularly important for weevil population management. Discarded and un-harvested tubers can support large population of weevils, and every effort should be made to remove such host material. Destroy alternate hosts; control of Ipomoea weeds is recommended.

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Alpha Scents, Inc., 1089 Willamette Falls Drive, West Linn, OR 97068

TEL: 503-342-8611 • FAX: 314-271-7297 • [sales@alphascents.com](mailto:sales@alphascents.com) • [www.alphascents.com](http://www.alphascents.com) • [m.alphascents.com](http://m.alphascents.com)