

Management of Whitefly and Fungus gnats on Poinsettia

D. Smitley
Michigan State University
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Scouting

Clip yellow sticky cards to wood stakes as soon as the crop is started. Change cards once per week and record the number of whiteflies and fungus gnats per card. Also, examine 30 plants in each house once per week for the presence of whitefly larvae and pupae on the undersides of the oldest leaves. If more than 4 larvae are found on 30 plants, an insecticide should be applied.

Systemic Insecticides

The only systemic insecticide available for whiteflies in the greenhouse is Marathon. It is most effective as a soil treatment. The insecticide is absorbed by the roots and translocated to the leaves. Translocation is most efficient when the plants are actively growing. Do not expect to see whitefly mortality until 3 weeks after application. Apply Marathon to stock plants at least 3-4 weeks before cuttings are taken. Treat your fall poinsettia crop between September 15 and October 15. Without any resistance problems, the Marathon should provide control for 8-10 weeks. Be prepared to apply foliar sprays if whiteflies become a problem towards the end of the crop. Marathon also works well against fungus gnat larvae.

Foliar Sprays for Whitefly

Apply foliar sprays once every 5-7 days when whiteflies are first observed, and monitor results with sticky cards and plant inspections.

Avid	Enstar II	Preclude TR
Azatin XL	Endeavor	Sanmite
Avid + Azatin	Naturalis-O	Tame
BotaniGard	Neemazad	Tame + Orthene
Decathlon	Orthene	Thiodan
Distance	Precision	

Foliar Sprays When Poinsettia Plants are in Color

The following materials have been tested with one application at the labeled rate (1X) and at 2X and 4X on V14 Glory in full color. No injury was observed.

Avid

Orthene 75SP

Decathlon

Talstar

Susceptibility of Poinsettia Cultivars to Silverleaf Whitefly

Some cultivars are more attractive to silverleaf whitefly than others. The following list of cultivars are grouped into three categories: most attractive and susceptible (***), moderately attractive (**), and least attractive to silverleaf whitefly (*).

*** Angelike

** Annette Hegg Lady

*** Annette Hegg Brilliant Diamond

** Supjibi

*** Annette Hegg Dark Red

* Celebrate

*** Mini-Minniken

* Celebrate 2

*** V14 Glory

* Lilo

*** V14 White

Biological Control of Silverleaf Whitefly

The most effective biological control for silverleaf whitefly on Poinsettia is *Eretmocerus*, a small parasitic wasp. Release of *Eretmocerus* must begin early in the crop and continue weekly for many weeks. The cost of the parasites may be greater than the cost of a typical insecticide program. If you are interested in learning more about biological control contact your regional extension horticulture agent for more information (Tom Dudek, Dean Krauskopf or Jeanie Himmelyn). At this time I am recommending that growers test *Eretmocerus* on an experimental basis only. I suggest releasing *Eretmocerus* in a small section or house to see how it works. Plan on scouting the biocontrol section at least once per week. Let me know what you find out.

Fungus Gnat Control

Fungus gnats are primarily a problem at sticking time but may continue to be a nuisance later in the crop if soil conditions remain very moist. The following insecticides are very effective as soil drenches or soil surface sprays that are watered into the soil:

Azatin XL, Dycarb, Marathon, Mesurol, Distance.