

# Fruit & Vegetable IPM Fact Sheet:

## Potato Leaf Hopper

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Adult PLH

### Description

Young potato leafhopper (*Empoasca fabae*, PLH) nymphs are tiny, whitish green, and wingless. Unlike white apple leafhoppers, they move sideways as well as forwards and backwards. Adults are greenish white, 1/3 inch long, and appear wedge-shaped from above. They fly readily when disturbed. Eggs are about 1/25 inch long, creamy-white, and cylindrical.

### Life History

PLH overwinter in the Gulf States and migrate northward each year, reaching North Carolina by early summer. Mated females lay eggs inside veins on the bottoms of leaves. After approximately ten days eggs will hatch, and after another two weeks the nymphs will mature and mate. There are usually three or four generations in North Carolina.



Nymph PLH feeding



Feeding damage on potato leaves

### Damage

Both adults and nymphs feed on leaf tissue on new shoots, causing stunting, curling, and a yellowing disease resulting from toxins PLH inject into the plant.

### Monitoring and Control

On apple, PLH populations rarely build enough to significantly impact mature trees. On new or high-density plantings the feeding can be damaging, but a wide range of insecticides have activity against PLH. Cutting new shoot growth can also reduce populations by removing the insects' primary feeding site.



Adult PLF feeding