

## SPOTTED WING DROSOPHILA

*Drosophila suzukii* Matsumura

### Plant pest monitoring advice

#### What is it?

*D. suzukii* is a vinegar fly native to Asia. It has the potential to establish in many areas throughout Europe that have suitable climatic conditions. In the more northern parts of Europe establishment of *D. suzukii* is likely to depend on the presence of overwintering sites associated with human habitation. It infests thin-skinned fruit and poses a significant risk to soft fruit and stone fruit. In Europe this pest has been found in France, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium and England. It was first found in Ireland in 2015.

#### Why should we be worried about it?

Most species of vinegar flies are not pests because they infest overripe, fallen, rotting fruit. But in the case of *D. suzukii* females lay eggs in ripening fruit. Larvae develop in the fruit and cause it to become soft and unmarketable. *D. suzukii* infests both cultivated and wild hosts. Crops on which significant economic damage has been reported include: *Prunus* spp. (mainly sweet cherries, but also on peaches and plums), *Vaccinium* spp. (blueberries), *Rubus* spp. (e.g. raspberries and blackberries), *Fragaria ananassa* (strawberries). *D. suzukii* have also be recorded on: *Actinidia* spp. (hardy kiwis), *Cornus* spp., *Diospyros kaki* (persimmons), *Ficus carica* (figs), *Vitis vinifera* (table and wine grapes). *D. suzukii* can be present in already damaged fruits, e.g. *Malus domestica* (apples) and *Pyrus pyrifolia* (Asian pears).

#### How do we recognise this pest?

The common name of this pest is the spotted wing drosophila, this is due to the black spots found on the wings of the male of this species. These black spots are **NOT** found on females. This fruit fly also has distinctive red eyes.



A male *D. suzukii*  
Image courtesy of  
the EPPO gallery

## Monitoring for this pest

Plastic traps are commercially produced for trapping *D. suzukii* but traps made from empty plastic bottles can also be used. Vinegar is added to the traps as an attractant. Traps should be checked once per week and any insects removed from the vinegar to prevent decomposition. Suspect samples should be sent to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine via your local plant health inspector. Ten traps per hectare are required for optimum monitoring. Traps should also be placed in packing and composting areas.

## Action in the event of suspect cases

Although this pest is not legislated for under the European Plant Health Directive, due the potential economic risks associated with this pest we would advise you to contact your local plant health inspector or the Division Headquarters at the number below if you suspect that you might have this pest.

### **Horticulture and Plant Health Division,**

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine,

Backweston Campus,

Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

Phone: 01-5058885

Fax: 01-6275994

Email: [plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie)