

Bitter Gourd

Pests

Red Pumpkin Beetle (*Aulacophora foveicollis*) :

The pest attacks the melons at the seedling stage. They make holes in cotyledonary leaves of watermelon. As a result the seedlings in the young stage die.

Control: Spraying Carbaryl (4 g/litre of water) or Metacid (1ml/litre of water) during the seedling stage effectively controls the pest.

Aphids (*Aphis sp.*) :

Aphids damage the plants by sucking the leaf sap. In young stage, cotyledonary leaves crinkle and in severe cases the plants wither. The leaves of fully grown vines turn yellow and plant loses its vigour.

Control: The aphids can be easily controlled by spraying Malathion (0.1 %) or Metasystox (0.1-0.2%) or Rogor (0.1-0.2%) sufficiently early before the attack becomes severe. Usually sprays against aphids and beetles can be combined.

Fruit Fly (*Dacus cucurbitae* and *Dacus dorsalis*) :

The fly attack is severe, especially after summer rains when the humidity is high. Maggots of this fly causes severe damage to young developing fruits. The adult fly lays eggs in the flowers. The eggs hatch into maggots, which feed inside the fruits and causes rotting.

Control: There is no direct control of maggots because they are inside the developing fruits. The affected fruits should be regularly pinched off and buried in a pit. Spraying of Endosulphan or Thiodan @ 6 ml per 4.5 litres of water during flowering stage partially checks the fly incidence. However, spraying should be done in the evening to prevent the repellent action to pollinating insects like bees from insecticidal sprays.