

Cucurbita pepo L., a new host of leafhoppers in Cuba

Cucurbita pepo L., un nuevo hospedante de saltahojas en Cuba



<https://eqrcode.co/a/eDpWGg>

 Adayakni Sánchez-Castro,  Madelaine Luisa Quiñones Pantoja, Bertha Piñol Pérez,  Heyker Lellani Baños Díaz, Basilia Miriam Fernández Argudín

Dirección de Sanidad Vegetal. Centro Nacional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (CENSA), Apartado 10, San José de las Lajas. Mayabeque. Cuba. Correo electrónico: ada@censa.edu.cu

Dear Editor;

Leafhoppers are polyphagous insects of great economic importance. They are distributed worldwide with a wide range of hosts among cucurbits. Leafhoppers cause considerable damage by the effect they produce during their direct feeding. Many of their species are considered pests of economic importance due to their ability to transmit different pathogens, including phytoplasmas. These pathogens are prokaryotic organisms of the class Mollicutes that cause a large number of emerging diseases in economically important crops around the world. In Cuba, leafhopper species have been identified in plants infected with phytoplasmas from Fabaceae, Solanaceae and Gramineae families, among others. However, its presence has not been reported in pumpkin crops (*Cucurbita pepo* L.).

For this purpose, samples were taken from pumpkin plants with symptoms similar to phytoplasma diseases. Leafhoppers were sampled in October 2017 in Madruga town, Mayabeque province, Cuba. The collected insects were observed, then rinsed and mounted on slides under stereoscopic microscope and observations were made with an Axiolab microscope. Leafhopper colonies developed on the underside of the symptomatic *C. pepo* leaves. One colony presented adults and nymphs of different ages, the youngest were light green and the oldest had a more intense green color. The leaves showed symptoms of wrinkling, yellowing and deformations, similar to those leaves of plants infected by phytoplasmas. The leafhoppers detected belonged to the genus *Empoasca*. The presence of these leafhopper species in pumpkin is the first report in Cuba.

However, considering the impact caused by leafhoppers as pests and in the transmission of phytoplasmas, the results suggest the need to identify leafhopper species associated with symptomatic pumpkin plants and the detection of phytoplasmas in such plants and leafhoppers to confirm this relationship.

Sincerely;

Received: 01/06/2020

Accepted: 07/07/2020

This article is under license [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International \(CC BY-NC 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)