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Pest Alert: Spotted Lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*

The spotted lanternfly (SLF) was detected in Virginia in January 2018. It is an invasive planthopper that was discovered in Pennsylvania in 2014. In Pennsylvania and its native range, SLF is a pest of grapes, peaches, hops, and apples. It is commonly associated with tree-of-heaven, *Ailanthus altissima.* It has the potential to be a serious pest of agriculture and home gardens in Virginia.

Clockwise from top left: Adult showing hind wings; adult with folded wings; early black and white nymphs; full grown nymphs showing red; and egg masses.

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Identification: The early nymphs are wingless, black, and have white spots on the body and legs. The later stage nymph develops red patches over the body while retaining the white-spot pattern.

Adult SLF are approximately 1" long and ½" wide. The legs and head are black, while the abdomen is yellow with broad, black bands on top and bottom. Its front wings are light-brown/grey with black spots and dashed black lines at the tip. The hind wings have scarlet red and black sections that are separated by a white stripe. At rest, the SLF shows light-brown, grayish wings with black spots held "tent-like" over its body. Adult females are distinguished by the presence of a red spot on the end of the abdomen.

SLF egg masses contain 30-50 eggs, are 1-1.5" long and ½-¾" wide, grayish-brown in color, and covered with a grey, waxy coating (newly laid egg masses are somewhat shiny). Old egg masses appear as rows of 30-50 brownish seed-like deposits in 4-7 columns, measuring roughly 1" long.

Hosts: Although SLF is most commonly found on *Ailanthus*, (tree-of-heaven), it can be found on over 70 other species of trees and is a pest of grapes, hops, peaches, and other tree fruits.

Signs and symptoms: Since the SLF produces sugary secretions called honeydew, look for the black sooty mold that grows on the honeydew. The sooty mold will cover branches, trunks, and man-made objects under the tree. In addition, some of the honeydew will ferment leaving a vinegar smell. The black sooty mold makes it appear like a fire has scorched the area.

Submitting a sample:

Specimen should be dead and placed in isopropyl or rubbing alcohol.

Please provide the following information, so we can track the spread:

Name _____ County or City _____

Street Address_____

Date Collected _____ Plant/Host Habitat _____

Comments or special instructions _____

_____

Submit the sample to your nearest local Cooperative Extension Office: **https://ext.vt.edu/offices.html**

Or submit a picture electronically: **https://ask.extension.org/groups/1981/ask**

For information on Spotted Lanternfly, see: **ext.vt.edu/spotted-lanternfly**

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