



E-ISSN: 2320-7078

P-ISSN: 2349-6800

JEZS 2016; 4(1): 308-311

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Received: 01-11-2015

Accepted: 04-12-2015

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Population dynamics of corn flea beetle and four-spotted leaf beetle on different maize cultivars at Peshawar

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Abstract

The present study aimed to record population dynamics of corn flea beetle and four-spotted leaf beetle on different maize cultivars at Peshawar was conducted at Agronomy Research Farm (ARF), The University of Agriculture, Peshawar (UAP), Pakistan during 2015. Seven maize cultivars, namely Azam, Jalal, Babar, Pahari, Iqbal, Climax 3055 and Climax 30M62 were tested. The overall mean density of corn flea beetle and four-spotted leaf beetle were found statistically non-significant on the seven tested maize cultivars. However, the overall mean density of corn flea beetle was recorded higher (2.26 beetle leaf⁻¹) on Pahari cultivar and lower (2.10 beetle leaf⁻¹) on Climax 30M62. Overall mean density of four-spotted leaf beetle was found maximum (1.23 beetle plant⁻¹) each on Pahari and Azam and lower (0.99 beetles plant⁻¹) on C-3055. On the basis of lower incidence of insect pests, all of the seven tested maize cultivars are recommended for cultivation during spring season at Peshawar.

Keywords: Corn Flea Beetle, Four-spotted Leaf Beetle, Maize cultivars, Population dynamics

1. Introduction

Corn, usually called “maize” (*Zea mays* L.) (family Poaceae) is an annual, cross pollinated, Kharif crop. Zea, makai, corn, jovar and silk corn, etc. are other synonyms used to recognize maize. Corn provides food for humans, feed for animals particularly poultry and livestock and raw materials for various industries, hence it is a multipurpose crop [1]. Maize is worldwide distributed crop [2]. It is the fourth largest grown crop in Pakistan after wheat, cotton and rice. After wheat and rice, maize occupies third position among the world’s most important cereal crops, but second after wheat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province [3]. Classification of maize occurs on the basis of grains structure. Popcorn, flint, pod, dent, sweet and flour are major types of maize [4].

In Pakistan, the total area under maize cultivation in 2013-14 was more than one million hectares and it yielded 3.5 million metric tons. The total area contribution of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province under maize was 56 percent which contributed 63 percent of the total production [5]. Maize is mostly grown in Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Malakand, Charsadda, Peshawar, D.I. Khan, Kohat and Bannu districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa [6]. In Pakistan, the most dependable, profitable and staple crop after potato is maize [7].

There are many factors which are responsible for low yield of maize [8] among which insect pests are major ones. During the initial growth phase, corn crop is more susceptible to the insect damage particularly up to 30 percent losses can be caused by the soil insects which may necessitate the replanting of the crop. Maize germinating seeds and seedlings are damaged by other insect pests such as cutworms, wireworm, false wireworms, black field earwigs, maize stem borer and beetles such as African black beetle. Traditional methods such as spraying in furrows and various other agronomic practices at the time of sowing are also very effective [9]. Invertebrate insect pests that attack the maize crop at the development and maturity stages include corn aphid, green vegetable bug, corn earworm, red shouldered leaf beetle, common army worm, maize leaf hopper, two-spotted spider mite, maize weevil and thrips [10]. To control specific pests, selective pesticides have been developed [11].

2. Materials and Methods

The research was conducted at the Agronomy Research Farm of The University of Agriculture Peshawar, during 2015. RCB design was used to carry out the experiment. There were three replications and each replication had seven treatments (Climax 30M62, Climax 3055, Babar, Iqbal, Azam, Jalal and Pahari). Separate experimental units were used to sow each maize cultivar. During March 2015, these maize cultivars were sown in lines. Buffer zone of one meter was kept between the replications and a half meter between the treatments for isolation. Size of the whole experimental field was 24m × 11m which was divided into 21 sub-plots each with an area of 3m × 3m. Row to row and plant to plant distance were kept 75cm and 25cm, respectively. Standard agronomic practices were adopted in the field throughout the maize growing season. The experimental field was left open for natural infestation of insect pests. Data was recorded on weekly basis from germination till the maturity of cultivars. The details of the experiments were as following:

Insect pest data collection for maize cultivars screening:

To check the comparatively resistant and susceptible responses of maize cultivars, the experimental field was observed thoroughly at weekly intervals for insect pests infestation on upper, middle and lower portion of the plant. Corn flea beetle data was recorded as number leaf⁻¹ while four-spotted leaf beetle data were recorded as number plant⁻¹ on randomly selected 6 plants per treatment. The collected specimens of four-spotted leaf beetles were killed with the help of killing jar and then properly pinned in the insect collection box while corn flea beetles specimens were mounted and were deposited at the Insect Museum, Department of Entomology, UAP.

Statistical analysis

Each recorded data was analyzed statistically by using Statistix 8.1 Software and Fisher Protected Least Significance Difference Test was used for the separation of means at 5% level of significance [12].

Table 1: Experimental Layout

<u>R1</u>	<u>R2</u>	<u>R3</u>
Azam (OPV)	Climax 3055 (hybrid)	Iqbal (OPV)
Babar (hybrid)	Jalal (OPV)	Pahari (OPV)
Pahari (OPV)	Climax 30M62 (hybrid)	Babar (hybrid)
Climax 3055 (hybrid)	Azam (OPV)	Jalal (OPV)
Iqbal (OPV)	Babar (hybrid)	Climax 3055 (hybrid)
Climax 30M62 (hybrid)	Pahari (OPV)	Azam (OPV)
Jalal (OPV)	Iqbal (OPV)	Climax 30M62 (hybrid)

OPV: Open Pollinated Varieties

3. Results

3.1. Population density of Corn Flea beetle

The results in Table 2 showed that mean density of corn flea beetle was significantly higher (0.97 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Azam and lower (0.57 beetles leaf⁻¹) on C-3055 in week 1. In week 2 mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher (1.26 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Azam and lower (1.02 beetles leaf⁻¹) on C-3055. Mean density of the flea beetle in week 3 was significantly higher (1.77 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Azam and lower (1.42 beetles leaf⁻¹) on C-30M62. In week 4 mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher of 2.49 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Pahari and lower of 2.24 beetles leaf⁻¹ on C-3055. Mean density of the flea beetle in week 5 was significantly higher (3.01 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Pahari and lower (2.51 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Jalal. In week 6 mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher of 3.03 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Azam and lower of 2.73 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Jalal. Mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher (2.98 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Iqbal and lower (2.75 beetles leaf⁻¹) on C-3055 in week 7. Similarly in week 8, mean density of flea beetle was higher of 2.88 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Babar and lower of 2.46 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Azam. In week 9 mean density of flea beetle was significantly higher (2.61 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Babar and lower of 2.37 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Azam. Moreover, mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher of 2.46 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Iqbal while lower of 2.16 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Jalal in week 10. Similarly in week 11, mean density of flea beetles was significantly higher (2.36 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Iqbal while lower (2.11 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Jalal. Mean density of the flea beetle was significantly higher (2.24 beetles leaf⁻¹) on Iqbal and lower (1.90 beetles leaf⁻¹) on

Babar in week 12. Also, overall mean density of the flea beetle was non-significantly different on the seven maize cultivars, where it was higher of 2.26 beetles leaf⁻¹ on Pahari and lower of 2.10 beetle leaf⁻¹ on C-30M62.

3.2. Population density of four-spotted leaf beetle

The results in Table 3 showed that mean density of four-spotted leaf beetle was non-significantly different on the seven maize cultivars in week 1. In week 2 mean density of the leaf beetle was significantly higher (0.53 beetles plant⁻¹) on Iqbal and Pahari (0.5 beetles plant⁻¹) and lower (0.39 beetles plant⁻¹) on Jalal and C-3055 (0.41 flies plant⁻¹). Mean density of the leaf beetle in week 3 was significantly higher (0.79 beetles plant⁻¹) on Azam and Pahari (0.74 beetles plant⁻¹). In week 4 mean density of the leaf beetle was significantly higher of 1.34, 1.27 and 1.23 beetles plant⁻¹ on Azam, Pahari and Babar and lower of 0.84 and 0.87 beetles plant⁻¹ on C-3055 and C-30M62, respectively. Mean density of the leaf beetle in week 5 was significantly higher (2.49 beetles plant⁻¹) on Azam and lower (1.87 beetles plant⁻¹) on C-3055. In week 6 mean density of the leaf beetle was significantly higher of 3.29 and 3.23 beetles plant⁻¹ on Azam and Pahari and lower of 2.69, 2.76 and 2.89 beetles plant⁻¹ on C-3055, C-30M62 and Jalal, respectively. Mean density of the leaf beetle was significantly higher (2.57 beetles plant⁻¹) on Azam and lower (2.11 beetles plant⁻¹) on C-3055 in week 7. Similarly in week 8, mean density of leaf beetle was higher of 1.9 and 1.86 beetles plant⁻¹ on Pahari and Babar and lower of 1.67 and 1.69 beetles plant⁻¹ on C-30M62 and C-3055. In week 9 mean density of leaf beetle was significantly higher (1.13 beetles plant⁻¹) on Pahari

and Azam (0.98 beetles plant⁻¹) and lower of 0.87, 0.89 and 0.91 beetles plant⁻¹ on C-3055, C-30M62 and Jalal, respectively. Moreover, mean density of the leaf beetle was non-significantly different on the seven maize cultivars in

week 10 and 11. Also, overall mean density of the leaf beetle was non-significantly different on the seven maize cultivars, where it was higher of 1.23 beetle plant⁻¹ each on Pahari and Azam and lower of 0.99 beetles plant⁻¹ on C-3055.

Table 2: Mean weekly density of flea beetle leaf⁻¹ on seven maize cultivars during 2015.

Treatment	Mean density of flea beetles in week no.												Overall Mean
	1 14-April	2 21-April	3 28-April	4 5-May	5 12-May	6 19-May	7 26-May	8 2-Jun	9 9-Jun	10 16-Jun	11 23-Jun	12 30-Jun	
Azam	0.97 b	1.26 a	1.77 a	2.34 bc	2.68 b	3.03 a	2.83 bcd	2.46 e	2.37 e	2.29 abcd	2.03 d	1.82 d	2.16
Babar	0.92 b	1.11 bc	1.59 b	2.28 cd	2.54 d	2.93 bc	2.87 bc	2.88 a	2.61 a	2.4 ab	2.12 c	1.9 cd	2.18
Pahari	1.13 a	1.2 ab	1.69 a	2.49 a	3.01 a	2.96 ab	2.8 cd	2.62 d	2.49 bcd	2.34 abc	2.22 b	2.2 a	2.26
C-3055	0.73 c	1.02 cd	1.46 c	2.24 d	2.63 bc	2.9 bcd	2.75 d	2.68 cd	2.55 ab	2.2 cd	2.15 bc	1.98 bc	2.11
Iqbal	0.88 b	0.95 d	1.51 bc	2.53 a	2.71 b	2.87 cd	2.98 a	2.85 a	2.52 bc	2.46 a	2.36 a	2.24 a	2.24
C-30M62	0.61 d	1.06 c	1.42 c	2.31 bcd	2.58 cd	2.84 d	2.78 d	2.73 bc	2.46 cd	2.24 bcd	2.18 bc	1.94 c	2.10
Jalal	0.77 c	1.18 ab	1.56 b	2.38 b	2.51 d	2.73 e	2.89 b	2.76 b	2.42 de	2.16 d	2.11 cd	2.06 b	2.13
LSD value	0.0958	0.0951	0.0961	0.0892	0.0889	0.0758	0.0821	0.0692	0.0829	0.1735	0.0865	0.0943	ns

Means in rows and columns followed by different letters are significantly different at 5% level of significance (LSD test).

ns = Non-significant.

Table 3: Mean weekly density of four-spotted leaf beetle plant⁻¹ on seven maize cultivars during 2015.

Treatment	Mean density of leaf beetle in week no.											Overall Mean
	1 21-April	2 28-April	3 5-May	4 12-May	5 19-May	6 26-May	7 2-Jun	8 9-Jun	9 16-Jun	10 23-Jun	11 30-Jun	
Azam	0.33	0.43 bc	0.79 a	1.34 a	2.49 a	3.29 a	2.57 a	1.84 abc	0.98 b	0.51	0.18	1.23
Babar	0.28	0.47 ab	0.71 ab	1.23 bc	2.42 a	3.16 b	2.44 bc	1.86 ab	0.93 bc	0.46	0.21	1.18
Pahari	0.31	0.5 a	0.74 abc	1.27 ab	2.45 a	3.23 ab	2.53 ab	1.9 a	1.13 a	0.49	0.19	1.23
C-3055	0.2	0.41 bc	0.66 bcd	0.84 e	1.87 c	2.69 e	2.11 e	1.69 d	0.87 c	0.39	0.11	0.99
Iqbal	0.23	0.53 a	0.69 abcd	1.16 c	2.23 b	3.01 c	2.34 cd	1.81 bc	0.95 bc	0.42	0.17	1.13
C-30M62	0.18	0.43 bc	0.61 d	0.87 e	1.89 c	2.76 e	2.27 d	1.67 d	0.89 bc	0.37	0.13	1.01
Jalal	0.27	0.39 c	0.64 cd	0.99 d	1.91 c	2.89 d	2.32 d	1.77 c	0.91 bc	0.44	0.14	1.06
LSD value	ns	0.0673	0.1025	0.0997	0.0766	0.0898	0.1033	0.0780	0.0998	Ns	ns	ns

Means in rows and columns followed by different letters are significantly different at 5% level of significance (LSD test).

ns = Non-significant.

4. Discussion

It revealed that densities of these insect pests peaked in the month of May. The differences in the present and earlier results might be due to variations in the time of sowing maize and agro-climatic differences. Sparks and Yates^[13] stated that the change in the climatic conditions has greatly affected the agricultural systems along with the insect pests. In the present results densities of insect pests on the seven maize cultivars were lower than that reported by some earlier researchers like Sparks and Yates^[13]; Mensah and Madden^[14]; Dhillion *et al.*^[15], which might be due to the fact that host plant resistance has played its role in suppressing insect pests populations.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The overall mean density of corn flea beetle and four-spotted leaf beetle were found statistically non-significant on the seven tested maize cultivars. However, the overall mean density of corn flea beetle was recorded higher (2.26 beetle leaf⁻¹) on Pahari cultivar and lower (2.10 beetle leaf⁻¹) on Climax 30M62. Overall mean density of four-spotted leaf beetle was found maximum (1.23 beetle plant⁻¹) each on Pahari and Azam and lower (0.99 beetles plant⁻¹) on C-3055. On the basis of above stated information, all of the seven tested maize cultivars are recommended for cultivation during spring season. Maize should be cultivated earlier in spring for lower incidence of insect pests. It is necessary to diversify new

resistance basis in maize. Further parameters at different locations need to be studied.

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