

Sweetpotato flea beetle (096)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On sweetpotato, most probably water spinach (kangkong), and wild *Ipomoea* types in the morning glory family. A minor pest.
- Adult beetles makes irregular feeding marks as they scape the leaf surface.
- Eggs laid in soil at base of vines; larvae feed on the roots, with some types (in the USA) making trails over the storage roots, which cause splitting.
- Cultural control: select healthy cuttings; avoid overlapping crops; avoid planting consecutive crops in the same land as eggs, larvae and pupae may still be in the soil.
- Chemical control: none recommended.

Common Name

Sweetpotato flea beetle

Scientific Name

Chaetocnema species. The species known as the sweetpotato flea beetle is *Chaetocnema confinis*, especially in the USA. There may be other species.



Photo 1. Adult sweetpotato flea beetle, *Chaetocnema confinis*.



Photo 4. Rots developing from feeding marks of sweetpotato flea beetle, *Chaetocnema confinis*, on sweetpotato.



Photo 2. Irregular feeding marks on the upper surface of sweetpotato made by the sweetpotato flea beetle, *Chaetocnema confinis*.



Photo 3. Sweetpotato flea beetles, *Chaetocnema confinis*, on leaf of *Ipomoea* (weed) species.

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Information from Chris Reid (pers. comm.) Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia; and from CABI (2019) *Chaetocnema confinis* (flea beetle). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/12530>). Photo 1 Mike Quinn, TexasEnto.net. (<http://bugguide.net/node/view/559582>). Photos 3&4 Mani Mua, SPC, Sigatoka Research Station, Fiji.

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