

Sweetpotato gall mite (138)

Summary

- Widespread distribution. South and Southeast Asia, Oceania. On sweetpotato and weeds in *Ipomoea* (morning glory) family. Probably reduces yield, but not known.
- Eggs laid in the galls, nymphs hatch, later becoming wormlike, white, cylindrical, tapering adults.
- Irregular growths (the galls) on the stems, leaves and leaf stalks, varying from 2-10 mm long and 1-5 mm wide. A microscope is needed to see the mites.
- Spread occurs on cutting used for planting.
- Cultural control: use only gall-free cuttings; cut off any vines with galls; weed; destroy volunteer sweetpotatoes; collect vines after harvest and burn.
- Chemical control: no trials reported; try abamectin.

Common Name

Sweetpotato gall mite

Scientific Name

Eriophyes gastrotrichus

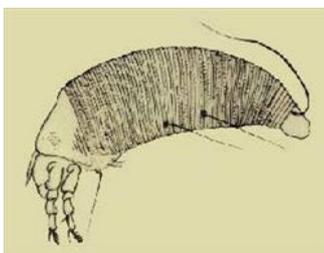


Figure. The mites are microscopic, too small to be seen by the naked eye; they are 0.15 mm long and 0.05 mm wide, tapering to the rear end.



Photo 1. Severe infection of galls caused by the sweetpotato gall mite, *Eriophyes gastrotrichus*, on stems and petioles of sweetpotato.



Photo 2. Galls caused by the sweetpotato gall mite, *Eriophyes gastrotrichus*, on petioles of sweetpotato. Some of the galls grow up to 10 mm long and 5 mm wide.



Photo 3. Growers often plant cuttings that have galls on them, not realising that the galls contain mites, which may reduce plant vigour and consequently the yield of the plants.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

Information (and Figure) from Amante V, et al. (2003). *A field guide to the sweetpotato problems in the Philippines*. The University of Queensland (<https://www.soilwealth.com.au/imagesDB/news/Sweet-Potato-Pest-and-Disease-Guide.pdf>); and from Ekman J, Lovatt J (2015) *Pests, Diseases and Disorders of Sweetpotato: A Field Identification Guide*. (<https://www.soilwealth.com.au/imagesDB/news/Sweet-Potato-Pest-and-Disease-Guide.pdf>).

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