

## Extension Fact Sheet 18: Bean Pod Sucking Bug



**Common name:** Bean pod-sucking bug

**Scientific name:** *Riptortus serripes* & *Riptortus linearis*.

**Hosts:** These bugs (photo, left) attack legumes, such as long bean, soybean, and mung bean. They may also attack rice and clover.

### Damage

Damage is done by adults and nymphs (they look like ants) feeding on the pods and seeds (photo, lower right). The feeding causes the pods to rot, or to develop without seeds inside. This insect can cause a lot of damage to bean crops.

### Biology and Life Cycle

*Riptortus* lays its eggs on the bean leaves and other plants; usually the eggs are laid singly. Both adult and nymphs sting the beans in the pods and suck their juices, so that the beans cannot mature. The pods turn brown, shrivel and die.

### Detection and Inspection

Look at the pods and under the leaves; look for ant-like bugs (photo, top right). Look closely for small holes and damaged, shrivelled pods.

## Management

### Cultural control:

Plant long beans near *Bixa* (photo, right), a method recommended by a farmer on Malaita (see flyer: *What is the pest spoiling your long beans?*). *Bixa* is known as the Lipstick Tree, because of its seeds. They are deep red, soft, and children use them to paint their faces, lips included. When the fruits open, they attract large numbers of *Riptortus*. The insects feed on the seeds, preferring them to the seeds of beans. In this way, the insects are 'trapped' on the *Bixa*, and attack on long beans is reduced.



### Chemical control:

- Insecticides have not been tested against *Riptortus* in Solomon Islands. It is likely that synthetic pyrethroids would be effective, such as lambda cyhalothrin or permethrin. See your MAL extension officer for details.
- A variety of *Derris*, brought many years ago from Papua New Guinea, may be effective as a spray. It contains rotenone, an insecticide. Plants are being multiplied by MAL and KGA for evaluation by growers. Contact those organisations for plants to test.