



LA CASA DE LES PAPALLONES

Epilachna varivestis Mulsant
(COLEOPTERA: COCCINELIDAE),
Mexican bean beetle in Catalonia
A. Gabaldà; J. I. Izquierdo

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Epilachna varivestis Mulsant (COLEOPTERA: COCCINELIDAE), Mexican bean beetle in Catalonia

A. Gabaldà¹; J. I. Izquierdo²

Epilachna varivestis Mulsant, the Mexican bean beetle, is a phytophagous Coccinellidae that acts as a plague on soya and other legumes in Mexico, the United States and Central America. Both larvae and adults feed on, above all, the leaves of host plants, which leads to defoliation and great damage to crops. In addition, *E. varivestis* is the vector of a number of bean viroses including southern bean mosaic virus (SBMV) and bean pod mottle virus (BPMV).

E. varivestis was first recorded in Catalonia in the county of El Vallès Oriental (Barcelona Province) in 1976 and was subsequently recorded from a number of other sites in Catalonia in the 1980s. Although it was only detected sporadically in sampling carried out in 1993–94, it can cause serious damage when it is present.

The current lack of records may be due to the species' inability to adapt to local climatic conditions and agricultural systems. Chemical control methods are very effective against this pest species and could eradicate it altogether.

1. Casa de les Papallones (c/ de l'Estació, 4 17535 Planoles)

2. Barcelona School of Agricultural Engineering (Urgell, 187 08036 Barcelona)

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