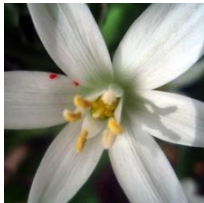




## EXOPEST FACT SHEET

### Red Spider Mite



#### General information about Red Spider Mite, Two-Spotted Spider Mite :

The Red Spider Mite is barely visible with the naked eye, but it can be seen. You would need a magnifying glass to really see one and identify it.

Hot, dry conditions are often the cause of spider mite infestations.

The Spider Mite is like the Thrips in that they both consume the chlorophyll from the leaves of the plant, cell by cell by sucking it out. And like the Thrips, the spider mite attacks in numbers, thousands of spider mites can all easily be found snacking together on one plant. This soon causes the plant to lose its ability to photosynthesize, which can leave to death of the plant.

#### Identification:

Like thrips, spider mites leave small grey to white to silver to bronze patches on the leaves. Unlike the thrips, spider mites leave wispy spider webs on the plant they are attacking.

This pest causes problems by:

The red spider mite can feed on hundreds of plants, including most vegetables and food crops (peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, beans, corn, strawberries) and many ornamentals like roses.

How to get rid of it:

Its natural predator, *Phytoseiulus persimilis*, commonly used as a biological control method, is one of many predaceous mites which prey exclusively or mainly on spider mites.

Chemical control of spider mites generally involves pesticides that are specifically developed for spider mite control (miticides or acaricides). Few insecticides are effective for spider mites and many even aggravate problems. Furthermore, strains of spider mites resistant to pesticides frequently develop, making control difficult. Because most miticides do not affect eggs, a repeat application at an approximately 10- to 14-day interval is usually needed for control.

Exopest do not treat this pest in general, unless it was to invade the house then just a general knockdown using a synthetic based pyrethrum/permethrin would be used.

Various insects and predatory mites feed on spider mites and provide a high level of natural control. One group of small, dark-colored lady beetles known as the "spider mite destroyers" (*Stethorus* species) are specialized predators of spider mites. Minute pirate bugs (family *Anthracoridae*), big-eyed bugs (*Geocoris* species) and predatory thrips can be important natural enemies.

A great many mites in the family *Phytoseiidae* are predators of spider mites. In addition to those that occur naturally, some of these are produced in commercial insectaries for release as biological controls. Among those most commonly sold via mail order are *Galendromus occidentalis*, *Phytoseiulus persimilis*, *Mesoseiulus longipes*, and *Neoseiulus californicus*.