

Stink bugs arrive in UK and threaten crops

25th March, 2021



There are many things that farmers have to worry about. Some farmers worry about a lack of rain. Others worry about pests that eat the crops. Farmers in the UK have a new pest to worry about - stink bugs. For the first time, stink bugs have arrived in the UK and they are causing

farmers trouble. The stink bugs came from either China, Japan or Korea. They are not native to the UK. The smelly insects are now posing a threat to fruit and vegetable crops in the south of England. The insects get their name from the bad smell they create when they feel they are in danger. Stink bugs were accidentally introduced to the USA in the mid-1990s and are now a problem for farmers in 44 states.

Stink bugs feed by piercing the surface of fruits and vegetables and then sucking out the juice. This makes the fruit rotten where the insects pierce the skin. It means farmers cannot sell the crops. The fruit quite often ends up as juice. Max Barclay, an insect expert, said there is no risk to human health from the insects feeding on fruit and vegetables. He said: "If you eat a damaged fruit, there's no risk to your health. The fruit just doesn't look beautiful, so the sale value is reduced." He said the species has a wide diet and can eat over one hundred different types of plants. He added that: "With climate change and global trade, these stories are going to become more frequent."

Sources: nhm.ac.uk / theguardian.com / independent.co.uk

Writing

Farming is the world's most important industry. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

worry / farmers / rain / crops / pests / stink / bugs / fruit / danger / vegetables / feed / juice / insect / expert / risk / human health / beautiful / plants / global trade

True / False

- a) The article says all farmers worry about a lack of rain. T / F
- b) The article says some farmers worry about pets eating their crops. T / F
- c) The stink bugs are causing problems for farmers in the north of England. T / F
- d) Stink bugs are causing problems for farmers in 44 American states. T / F
- e) Stink bugs feed by sucking the juice out of fruit. T / F
- f) Fruit that stink bugs eat often gets turned into juice. T / F
- g) Stink bugs can eat over 100 different types of plants. T / F
- h) The article says stink bugs really like climate change. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. worry | a. outside |
| 2. lack | b. creating |
| 3. trouble | c. lessened |
| 4. posing | d. problems |
| 5. feel | e. harmed |
| 6. surface | f. be anxious |
| 7. ends up | g. regular |
| 8. damaged | h. sense |
| 9. reduced | i. shortage |
| 10. frequent | j. finishes |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you want to know about stink bugs?
- c) What would you do if you saw a stink bug?
- d) What do you think of the name 'stink bug'?
- e) Would you buy fruit that is 'not beautiful'?
- f) How is climate change affecting farmers?
- g) What is your most-hated insect?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a farmer?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. There are many things that farmers | a. introduced to the USA |
| 2. Some farmers worry about a lack | b. a threat to fruit |
| 3. Others worry about pests that | c. become more frequent |
| 4. The smelly insects are now posing | d. of rain |
| 5. Stink bugs were accidentally | e. the surface of fruits |
| 6. Stink bugs feed by piercing | f. risk to your health |
| 7. This makes the fruit | g. have to worry about |
| 8. If you eat a damaged fruit, there's no | h. types of plants |
| 9. eat over one hundred different | i. eat the crops |
| 10. these stories are going to | j. rotten |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about pests?
- What is the world's biggest pest?
- Can a human be a pest?
- What do you know about stink bugs?
- How can farmers protect their crops against pests?
- What are the most important crops in your country?
- How can governments stop non-native pests from entering the country?
- What is your favourite insect?

Spelling

- worry about a klac of rain
- causing farmers elutrbo
- They are not anetiv to the UK
- posing a ahrett to fruit
- the bad smell they tcaree
- Stink bugs were caatcneldiy introduced
- Stink bugs feed by piercing the fcaures
- sucking out the ejcui
- This makes the fruit ottern
- If you eat a dgamdea fruit
- the sale value is eddreca
- going to become more qteufren

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. b	5. h
6. a	7. j	8. e	9. c	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Wheat

You think wheat is the most important crop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their crops aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): cocoa, bananas or potatoes.

Role B – Cocoa

You think cocoa is the most important crop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their crops aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): wheat, bananas or potatoes.

Role C – Bananas

You think bananas are the most important crop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their crops aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): cocoa, wheat or potatoes.

Role D – Potatoes

You think potatoes are the most important crop. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their crops aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): cocoa, bananas or wheat.

Speaking – Crops

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important crops at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| • Cocoa | • Wheat |
| • Rice | • Corn |
| • Bananas | • Avocados |
| • Potatoes | • Coffee |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.