

# Mealybug on cocoa

*Planococcoides njalensis*, *Planococcus citri* Kokoo sumor☺



Cocoa pod with mealybug infestation (E. Hidalgo, CABI)



Close up of adult female mealybugs (E. Hidalgo, CABI)

Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is important to try and manage populations of mealybugs as they can damage cocoa plants as well as spread cocoa swollen shoot virus disease</li> <li>Remove chupons on a regular basis as these are succulent and attractive for mealybugs</li> <li>Remove or avoid planting trees which are known to harbour ants such as <i>Canthium glabriflorum</i> (Nteteadupon, gyapam).</li> <li>Mealybugs have a close relationship with attendant ants. The ants protect them from natural enemies and can also spread the mealybugs by carrying them from tree to tree. Ants feed on a sugary substance (honeydew) in this simbyotic relationship in return for their protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional relevant crops: Kola, mango, avocado</li> <li>Mealybugs occur in colonies and cause damage to seedling, cherelles and shoots by sucking the sap from their tissues.</li> <li>Monitoring for mealy bugs should be done throughout the year but especially during August to April. Inspect trees twice a week when there are pods and when there are new shoots</li> <li>Check the entire plant for any white powdery or waxy material which are indicators of presence of mealybugs</li> <li>Also look out for sooty mould on the upper surfaces of leaves - a black powdery fungus which grows on the honeydew excreted by the mealybugs</li> <li>Take action when at least one plant is infested</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the number of ants in the field by destroying their nests</li> <li>Apply a potassium based soap such as alata samina in a solution with water to kill mealybugs. This can be applied using a knapsack sprayer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COCOBOD do not recommend using chemical insecticides for controlling mealybugs. Their waxy waterproof coating makes the use of contact pesticides ineffective - systemics can be used but create the risk of leaving residues</li> </ul>	



## Ghana

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