

New pest affecting pepper and the goji berry plant

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*The Bulgarian Food Safety Agency has taken measures against a new pest for the country, which attacks mainly goji berry and pepper plants. The species *Aceria kuko* - Godji berry gall mite, a gall-forming eriophyid mite on goji berry, has been detected for the first time in the area of the town of Plovdiv, the village of Malak Chardak. All areas where infestation has been detected have been placed under quarantine and measures are being implemented to limit the spread of the pest.*

At the Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory in Sofia, the phytosanitary inspectors of the BFSA have established the presence of an infestation with the gall-forming eriophyid mite in the regions of Plovdiv, Vidin, Vratsa, Varna, Blagoevgrad and Pernik. Mainly plantations and nurseries with goji berry and pepper are affected. The measures undertaken for the containment and eradication of the infestation are being carried out by the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency. The areas with infested plants have been placed under quarantine. The

collection of cuttings from diseased plantations is also prohibited. Pruning and destruction of the attacked plant parts is carried out, as well as chemical treatment prescribed by the specialists of the Agency. The species *Aceria kuko* - Godji berry gall mite - gall-forming eriophyid mite on goji berry - has been detected for the first time in the area of the town of Plovdiv, the village of Malak Chardak, the inspectors reported.

Gall-forming eriophyid mite (*Aceria kuko*)

The gall-forming eriophyid mite on goji berry is distributed in China, North Korea and Taiwan. In 2011 it was observed in Slovenia and Germany, and in 2012 in Greece and the United Kingdom. In 2015 it also appeared in Hungary and Cyprus. It was probably introduced into our country with infested planting material from neighbouring countries. It attacks mainly plants of the species *Lycium barbarum* (goji berry), a plant from the family Solanaceae /Nightshade/. The pest has also been detected on *Capsicum annuum* L. (pepper) and *Solanum nigrum* L. (black nightshade). The damage caused by the mites is on the leaves of the attacked plants, where they form galls in the shape of a bead, 3 to 5 cm in diameter; inside them are the mites, which feed on the sap of the plants.

More on the topic:

Eriophyid mites