

National program of measures for the control of soil pests in potatoes from the family Wireworms (Elateridae)

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The preparation of the National Programme of Measures for the Control of Soil Pests in Potatoes from the family Wireworms (Elateridae) is necessitated with the aim of reducing the losses caused by the pest in the country, by defining a package of measures for monitoring and control. This programme is intended for specialists – agronomists and agricultural producers, in their activities related to the protection of plants from pests.

Wireworms are the larvae of coleopteran insects from the family Elateridae, because they have a long, thin, cylindrical and strongly chitinized (hard) body, resembling a piece of rusty wire.

The adult insects of this family are known as click beetles or skipjacks because, when placed on their back, they jump (skipjacks) and produce a sound that resembles knocking (click beetles). This is achieved by a sudden flexing of the beetles at the point between the pronotum and the elytra, where the body is strongly constricted. Wireworms are among the most common polyphagous pests and are characterized by wide ecological and feeding plasticity, which determines their wide geographical distribution. Damage is caused by the larvae. They lead a subterranean way of life, which makes their control difficult.

In Bulgaria, wireworms are represented by larger populations from the genera *Agriotes* sp., *Melanotus* sp., *Stenicera* sp. (= *Corymbites* sp.), *Selatosomus* sp. The concealed way of life of wireworms, poor agricultural practices and the monocultural cultivation of potatoes in the regions where this crop is present, necessitate preventive protection measures and the use of soil insecticides.

The National Programme has been developed on the basis of Art. 6, item 2 of the Plant Protection Act by the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency – Directorate “PP and PHBCP”, Directorate “PPRT” and the Central Plant Quarantine Laboratory.

It uses materials, scientific studies, data, tables, presentations, publications, photographic material from EPPO (European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization) and others.

The National Programme of Measures for the Control of Soil Pests in Potatoes from the family Wireworms (*Elateridae*) can be found **HERE**.