State of California **Department of Food and Agriculture**
Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services
1220 N Street, Sacramento, California 95814

PEST EXCLUSION ADVISORY No. 23-2025

To: All County Agricultural Commissioners Date: October 7, 2025

Place: Sacramento

Phone: (916) 654-0312

From: Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services

Subject: **Pest of Concern: Cotton jassid (*Amrasca biguttula*)**

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is issuing this advisory to notify counties of an invasive pest, *Amrasca biguttula* (cotton jassid) that was recently discovered in the southeastern United States. The insect has not yet been detected in California.

Key Information:

- The cotton jassid, *A. biguttula* is a polyphagous plant-sucking leafhopper that feeds on juices within plant leaves, resulting in a condition known as 'hopperburn' – a disorder which stunts the plant and is characterized by yellowing, browning, curling, and eventual loss of the leaves (Fig.1) and abortion of flowers/fruits. (Rajendran et al., 2018; Schreiner, 1990). Leafhoppers also produce honeydew while feeding, which coats nearby leaves and encourages the growth of sooty mold that reduces photosynthesis (Rajendran et al., 2018).

- *A. biguttula* can be recognized by black spots on the anterior of their head and near the apex of the forewing (Fig. 2). Similar to some other Cicadellidae, they are pale green in color and are between 1-3mm long.

- *A. biguttula* is reported as a pest of at least six plant families and hosts include cotton, grapevine, tomato, okra, eggplant, sunflower, and hibiscus.

- *A. biguttula* is reported to be more abundant on the undersides of leaves (Cabrera-Asencio et al., 2023) and along field margins (Vyavhare et al., 2025). (Fig.3).

- Eggs of *A. biguttula* are laid within veins and midribs of host plants (Schreiner, 2000), making them difficult to see without specialized tools (Mensah, 2006). Development from egg to adult takes approximately 24 days. There are multiple generations per year in warm climates.

- Although *A. biguttula* is a highly mobile insect, it is not a strong flier and is unlikely to disperse over long distances unassisted. Wind- or human-assisted dispersal may be responsible for long distance movement of this insect.
- The primary methods of detecting A*. biguttula* consist of beating, sweep-netting, and use of sticky cards. No lures or traps specific to this pest are known.

- One pathway that may be important for the spread of *A. biguttula* in the southeastern United States is the movement of infested hibiscus plants from Florida (Vyavhare et al., 2025)

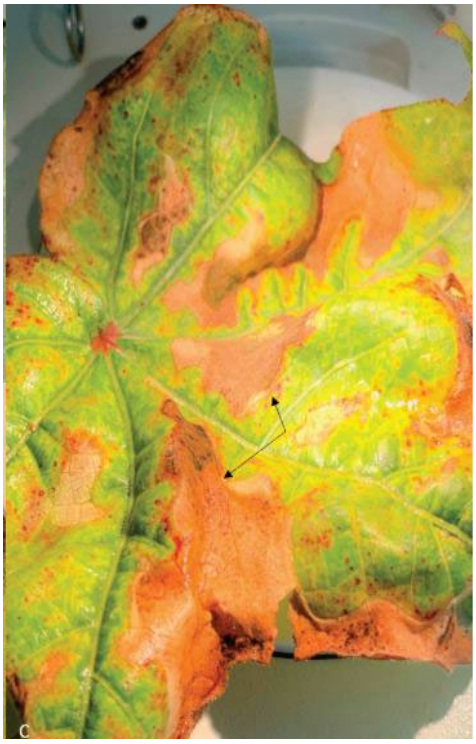

Fig 1. Damage to cotton leaves showing 'hopperburn' (adapted from Cabrera-Asencio et al., 2023)

Fig 2. *A. biguttula* adult (source: Badiger, 2020)

Fig 3. Underside of okra leaf with adult *A. biguttula* (USDA photo by Amy Roda)

For questions regarding this advisory, please contact Interior Pest Exclusion at peinfo@cdfa.ca.gov or call (916) 654-0312.