

Controlling Colorado Potato Beetle with Guinea Fowl

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Colorado Potato Beetle (CPB) is a major pest of potato crops, requiring pesticide applications or handpicking to control.

Allowing a flock of Guinea Fowl to forage in the potato field controls CPB numbers with less labor input than handpicking, and without the need for pesticides.

An added benefit is that Guinea Fowl are a marketable meatbird.



BENEFITS:

- saves labor input over hand picking CPB larvae
- reduces pesticide application and potential resistance
- provides extra source of income if birds are processed
- minimal weed control provided by foraged and scratching

DRAWBACKS:

- Guinea Fowl are more challenging to keep than chickens.
- If left too long in a small plot, potato yield can be reduced by Guinea Fowl scratching the soil.

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1

YEAR DEVELOPED: 2022

SUPPLY LIST:

- mobile poultry housing
- moveable electric fencing
- Guinea keats

ESTIMATED COST:

\$700

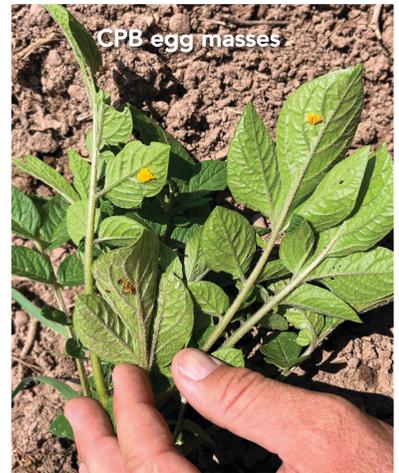
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Counting CPB adults



Counting CPB eggs & larvae



CPB egg masses

FINE TUNING:

For trial purposes we replicated this experiment over three smaller plots, which lead to crop damage if the hens were left in one area for too long, and thus required additional labor to move the hens regularly. This would likely be improved in a production setting where the birds would have access to a much larger potato field.



Guinea Fowl foraging in potatoes

PRO TIP:

We started using hand-held vacuum cleaners CPB adults and larvae. This is still labor-intensive, but definitely an improvement over handpicking. We'll apply this method to other pests on the farm.

