

RED PALM WEEVILS: Facts and Notes | Control | Prevention

Facts and Notes

The red palm weevil (*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*) is a beetle that is a particular menace to palm trees. Originally from South and South-east Asia, it is now found in more than 60 countries, where it threatens date palms, ornamental palms and coconut palms.

The red palm weevil develops inside the stipe (trunk) of the tree, causing the palms to fall and the tree to die. It is often detected very late in palm trees, which is a major problem in the control of this pest.

The cause of rapid spread is more often due to human intervention, by transporting infested young or adult date palm trees and offshoots from contaminated to uninfected areas.

RPW in KAUST and the controlling approach



Date palm with RPW infection has oozing on its trunk.



Quarantine, mechanical, and chemical controls have been used to control infestation.

Pest Control procedures in managing pests

1. Check for signs of RPW infestation. Proper monitoring of plants in the early stages of infestation in palms prevent weevil infestations from occurring.
2. IPM-guided essential control mainly:
 - **Cultural Control** - Field sanitation and cultural practices are key to weevil prevention. Removing vegetation around palm trunks and cultivating palm basins eliminates harborages. Adjustments to the irrigation system lessen water spray on palm trunks, decreasing moisture.
 - **Quarantine Measure** - Ensure that all new palm stock has the proper certification, seals, or tags from the Ministry of Agriculture before it is admitted to KAUST.
 - **Mechanical Control** - Split, inspect, and treat dead palms before removal. Treating all basins eliminates risk. Trap and monitor RPW and pests with pheromones and light traps.
 - **Chemical Control** - Apply insecticides in a highly diluted mixture to the affected area in accordance with the instructions provided by the manufacturer, such as Abamectin 18EC (*Abamectin 1.8EC*).
3. Monitor the plants condition after the treatment. It is recommended to keep record for future evaluation.

What you can do to prevent RPW Insects in your garden

- Maintain good sanitary conditions, remove any garbage and debris from your backyards and gardens.
- Cooperate with the service provider during treatment activities by keeping yourself and your pets in a safe place.
- Report sightings or request assistance by contacting the Horticulture and Pest Control Department or via C&C Call Center by calling 959 from any landline.