

Pasture Pests:  
**Brassica springtails/ Garden springtails**  
**(*Bourletiella sp*)**  
Information Sheet

### Identification.

There are a large number of springtails found throughout New Zealand.

The most common of these soft bodied insects (*Bourletiella hortensi*) that cause of damage to seedling brassica crops.

They live on the surface of the soil, are very small (size of a pin head) and appear in large numbers they vary in colour from brown to black.



There is very little difference between the nymph stage or the adult other than size. They have an appendage that enables them to spring quickly into the air once disturbed.

Place a piece of white card onto the soil surface and tap the ground around it to assess numbers.

### Distribution and damage

Found throughout New Zealand the Garden Springtail in the right conditions will start chewing at your brassica crop from the minute the seed coat splits.

Therefore they can do significant damage well before they emerge from the soil, making early detection, or even better still, preventive measures very important.

Scalloping and or small pitting on the leaf edge is a sure fire sign of springtail damage, pitting can however also be blamed, correctly in some cases, on windblown soil particles as well.

### Lifecycle

Little is known about the life cycle of springtails however under moist conditions they develop very rapidly and will produce several generations each year eggs are laid in the soil.

*For more information or to discuss how to protect your pasture against Springtails please contact Specialty Seeds*



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