Honeydew Moth

Cryptoblabes gnidiella

Native to the Mediterranean region, it has been introduced by import to Malaysia, New Zealand, Hawaii, and parts of tropical and subtropical America. It is likely that this species is more widespread than reported since many U.S. ports of entry have intercepted this pest from countries that have not reported infestations. Most of the interceptions have occurred on plant material and baggage from many countries. Host plants include grape, citrus fruits, coffee, and other agriculturally important crops.

Adult *C. gnidiella*. Photo by Milliere

C. gnidiella larva. Photo by Milliere

Damage:
On grapes, the newly hatched larvae enter the fruit through the space between the fruit and stalk. Some larvae feed on the stems when the grapes are green which causes wilting and early grape fall. When the grapes are close to ripening and have been fed on, juice leakage can lead to rotting due to secondary pathogens which reduces wine quality.

Description:
The eggs are oval and white but turn yellowish before they hatch. Eggs are laid singularly or in small batches on fruit. When mealybugs are present when the eggs hatch, the larvae initially feed on the honeydew which is excreted by the mealybugs themselves along with any insect remnants. If mealybugs are not present, larvae will feed on grapes that are almost ripe. Larvae are yellowish, reddish- or brownish-grey with stripes from head to the end of the body. Larvae spin a dense webbing around the host plants stalk. This species pupates either on the fruit in which it fed upon or on the ground near the feeding site.

Photos:
Milliere. Pyralidae: Cryptoblabes gnidiella. April 2015. Photos: Adult *C. gnidiella* and *C. gnidiella* larva. http://pathpiva.wifeo.com/cryptoblabes-gnidiella-1.php
Information:
Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey. Grape Commodity-based Survey. April 2015. https://caps.ceris.purdue.edu/node/596

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