THRIP PREDATOR
Neoseiulus cucumeris CRS

Product: *Neoseiulus cucumeris* is a very small (0.5mm), tan coloured predatory mite. They have a characteristic tear drop shape and 8 long slender legs. They can be seen as small brown specks running across leaf surfaces. The mites are usually found on the underside of leaves, especially along leaf veins where the females lay their eggs on fine leaf hairs. The adult female can lay up to 35 eggs in her lifetime. The tiny nymphs hatch in 2-3 days and feed on pollen, spider mite eggs and the smallest thrips. The adult female mites consume an average of one thrip/day over a 30-day life span, and when thrip populations have been eliminated, the predator mites remain established in the greenhouse, feeding on leaf surface fungi, pollen & spider mites. These packs also contain various life stages of *N. cucumeris*, ranging from eggs thru to adults, but contain much more food. If hung in a shaded, humid location, they will continue to release surplus adults over a 6–8-week period.

Target: The prey of *N. cucumeris* is primarily the immature stage of both eastern & western flower thrips, onion thrips, greenhouse thrips, and to a lesser extent broad & cyclamen mites. Thrips feed by scraping and rasping at tender leaf surfaces. The first symptoms of a thrip infestation are leaves that appear finely speckled with yellow spots. Later, a silvery metallic looking sheen may cover leaf surfaces, & black specks may be scattered about. Both larvae & adults appear similar, but adults have wings & can fly.

Release: If using Controlled Release Packs, hang from the branches of the plants in the treatment area. Bags should be hung within 25cm of the growing point on greenhouse crops, ensuring good contact with stem & leaves. Leave packs in place for no less than 8 weeks. Bags should not be exposed to direct sunlight.

Rate: Greenhouse Cucumbers: 1 bag per 6-8 plants every 3-4 weeks; for Greenhouse Sweet Peppers: 1 bag per 8-12 plants every 3-4 weeks, or 1 bag per large specimen plant every 6-8 weeks (for interior plantscapes).

Notes:

- Optimal conditions consist of temperatures between 21-28oC (70-82oF) and 60 -80% RH. If the nighttime temperature in the crop is kept at 21oC (70oF) or above, then *cucumeris* can be used any time of year.
- It is essential to start releases of predator mites while thrips numbers are very low as it takes 3-4 weeks for Neoseiulus cucumeris to become established. Because *cucumeris* feeds on immature thrips stages, a decrease in adult populations will not occur for about 3 weeks.
- Use sticky cards (also available at NIC) to monitor thrips at a rate of 1 trap/50 plants. Cards should be checked weekly.
- Certain insecticides & fungicides can be integrated with cucumeris. Please ask for recommendations.
- Beneficial Nematodes (available at NIC), will help control thrips that drop to the soil to pupate.

Please let us know within 24 hours of receipt if there are any problems with your Live Insect Order.

For further Information Contact: **NATURAL INSECT CONTROL**, 3737 Netherby Road, Stevensville, Ontario, L0S 1S0
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For further Information on all NIC Beneficial Insects go to **www.naturalinsectcontrol.com**