True bugs (Heteroptera) on monocultures in Latvia

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A comprehensive material of Heteroptera was collected from various crops, mainly potatoes, cereals and sugar beets, in Latvia during the periode 1974-1999. The damage caused by Heteroptera varied greatly between years, especially on potato. Some year the bugs caused only cosmetic damage and only on leaves; while in other years, severe damage was found on the main sprout and stem, both early feeding of flowers and necrosis of leaves and stems were observed. Two sampling methods were used in the field, sweep nets and beating sheet. In total, about 360 species of Heteroptera have been recorded from Latvia; of these 30 species have been found in crops of potato, 13 on winter and spring wheat, and 20 on sugar beet. Before 1990, when monocultures began to dominate in Latvia, only 7 species of Heteroptera were found on potato, 12 on different cereals, and 12 on sugar beet. In total, 8 families of Heteroptera families were found in the studied crops, but only two species were dominating, *Lygus rugulipennis* and *Orthotylus flavosparsus*, both belonging to the family Miridae. One of the main objectives in our project was to identify adult Miridae and, in particular, to study feeding and oviposition preferences in species of *Lygus* in monocultures of potato when enough wild plants of monocotyledons and dicotyledons were present in the surroundings.

Key words: Heteroptera, *Lygus* spp., monocultures.

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