



Northern giant hornet is an invasive species that was discovered in Whatcom County in 2019. Northern giant hornets attack honey bees and other insects. They can kill an entire beehive in a matter of hours. While initially detected in Whatcom County, it is not known how widespread this pest may be.

Risk to farmers and farms

- 1. Direct damage to soft fruits.** While northern giant hornets primarily feed on honey bees and other insects, they have also been known to eat soft fruit. This could result in damaged fruit that you would not be able to sell.
- 2. Reduced pollination.** Because northern giant hornets can destroy entire honey bee hives, this can reduce the number of pollinators available to pollinate your crops.
- 3. Beehive attacks on your property.** Once northern giant hornets begin a group attack on a beehive, they will defend it as aggressively as they would their own nest. During this time, they are very likely to sting people approaching that hive.
- 4. Stings: allergic reactions and more.** Northern giant hornets do not generally bother people. However, they will sting if they feel threatened. They can sting repeatedly and their venom is more toxic than that of local bees and wasps. Stings can be serious and even life threatening if you are allergic or receive repeated stings. You could be at risk for stings if you:
 - step on a nest (they usually nest in the ground in forested areas or in tree cavities)
 - swat at them
 - disturb them when harvesting or otherwise working on your property (brush whacking, mowing, applying pesticides, etc.)

Please note that typical beekeeping attire will not protect you from northern giant hornet stings.

What farmers can do

Please photograph and report any suspect crop damage from northern giant hornet using the reporting methods below.

WSDA is currently working to locate and eradicate populations of northern giant hornet in Washington. Learn about northern giant hornet and how to identify it. If you encounter an northern giant hornet, note the location, obtain a photograph if you can safely do so, and report it. You can report northern giant hornet using these methods:

- Visit agr.wa.gov/hornets
- Call 1-800-443-6684
- Email hornets@agr.wa.gov

Learn more about northern giant hornet at agr.wa.gov/hornets.



WSDA received one report from a farmer of an northern giant hornet repeatedly "stinging" his tractor windshield while mowing a field near a forested area.



ABOVE: These northern giant hornets will leave piles of dead bees, most of them headless, outside their beehive, similar to that shown in the photo above. This photo is courtesy of Washington beekeeper Teddy McFall. (WSDA has not been able to confirm that this is definitely the result of an NGH attack.)

