

Pest Profile



Photo credit: By Susan Ellis, United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Bugwood.org.

Common Name: Cheese Skipper

Scientific Name: *Piophilina casei* (Linnaeus)

Order and Family: Diptera: Piophilidae

Size and Appearance: Adult *Piophilina casei* are about 4-5 mm in length, have a shiny black abdomen, a brown thorax, yellow antennae, brown eyes, and iridescent wings. Maggots are translucent white to dirty white in color, 6-8 mm in length, leg and eyeless, and have 2 dark mouth hooks.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	1.0 mm in length	150 small white eggs laid on surface of lean meat or cheese source.
Larva/Nymph	6-8 mm in length depending on instar	White, cylindrical, 2 dark hooks for mouthparts, legless, eyeless, 4 instars. Bore into food consuming.
Adult	4-5 mm long	Shiny black thorax, brown abdomen and head, brown compound eyes, yellow antennae and mouthparts, iridescent wings.
Pupa (if applicable)	8-10 mm long	Pupae case is hardened, reddish-brown, and consists of 3rd instar larval skin. Larva finishes out last instar in pupal

		case. Adult emerges by splitting open the end.
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Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Sponging

Host /s: *P. casei* feed on moldy cheese, ham, bacon, beef steaks, rotting fungi, cadavers, smoked fish, and other high protein sources. Prefer proteins that have gone bad or are heavily salted.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Cheese Skippers ruin food that they infest and make it unfit for consumption. If consumed, it is a cause of concern as maggots that are passed through intestinal tract often cause lesions. They have also been found infesting the chest and nasal passages of human. It is likely they are able to spread disease similar in manner to House Flies given their movement from decaying food sources.

References:

Smith, E.H. and Whitman, R.C. (2007). Stored Product Pests- Cheese/Ham Skipper. In *NPMA Field Guide of Structural Pests*. (9.15.1-3). National Pest Management Association International.

Lewis, C., Kaufman, P.E. (January, 2010). Cheese Skipper. University of Florida, Department of Entomology and Nematology. Retrieved on July 27th, 2016 from http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/urban/flies/cheese_skipper.htm