

## Canola Flea Beetle

In 2013, damage to canola seedlings by the crucifer flea beetle, *Phyllotreta cruciferae* (Goeze), was high (ca. 80%) in many parts of Montana. The adult beetles feed on canola leaves, causing many small holes that stunt growth and reduce yield, evidence that when flea beetles emerge in large numbers, they can quickly destroy a young canola crop.



**Figure 1.** Canola in bloom

### Damage

Some reports have estimated flea beetle damage to brassica oilseed crops in North America to be >\$300 million annually, and this damage is exacerbated by the fact that flea beetles are one of the most difficult to manage pests of canola.



Photo courtesy of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University

**Figure 2.** Adult canola flea beetle

### Research

- Ongoing research determined threshold levels of 15-20% damage necessitated treatment in the Golden Triangle.
- Biological control measures being developed at WTARC are aimed at controlling populations of overwintering adults flea beetles.



**Figure 3.** Flea beetle damaged canola