

California Pest Rating Proposal

***Frankliniella panamensis* Hood: A thrips**

Thysanoptera: Thripidae

Pest Rating: A

Comment Period: 08/27/2025 through 10/11/2025

Initiating Event:

This thrips is frequently intercepted on plant material. It has not been assessed with the pest rating system. Therefore, a pest rating proposal is needed.

History & Status:

Background:

Frankliniella panamensis is a polyphagous thrips. For example, Gunawardana et al. (2017) reported it to be associated with (presumably in many or most cases as a host plant) the following plant genera: *Alstroemeria*, *Aster*, *Citrus*, *Dianthus*, *Eryngium*, *Hypericum*, *Limonium*, *Passiflora*, *Rosa*, *Rosmarinus*, *Rubus*, and *Solidago*.

No reports of impacts to plants attributed to *F. panamensis* were found. In addition, it is not known to be a virus vector (Thrips of New Zealand). However, this species could be confused with the related serious pest species *F. occidentalis* if not examined by a competent taxonomist. Therefore, damage caused by *F. panamensis* could have been incorrectly attributed to *F. occidentalis*. In addition, the fact that the closely related *F. occidentalis* is considered a serious pest, suggests the possibility that *F. panamensis* could have significant pest potential as well, perhaps in a different environment (than it is currently known to occur) (Gunawardana et al., 2017).

Worldwide Distribution: *Frankliniella panamensis* is reported from: **Central America:** Costa Rica;
South America: Colombia (Thrips of New Zealand).

Official Control: *Frankliniella panamensis* is not known to be under official control.

California Distribution: *Frankliniella panamensis* is not known to be established in California.

California Interceptions: *Frankliniella panamensis* is frequently intercepted on plant material, for example, on cut flowers from Colombia (California Department of Food and Agriculture).

The risk *Thrips panamensis* poses to California is evaluated below.

Consequences of Introduction:

1) **Climate/Host Interaction:** *Frankliniella panamensis* is polyphagous and would likely find suitable host plants over much of California. The reported distribution of this thrips in Colombia suggests that it may be limited to subtropical and temperate climates, avoiding tropical lowlands (Ebratt-Ravelo et al., 2019). It may be able to establish over much of California. Therefore, it receives a **High (3)** in this category.

- Low (1) Not likely to establish in California; or likely to establish in very limited areas.

- Medium (2) may be able to establish in a larger but limited part of California.

- **High (3) likely to establish a widespread distribution in California.**

2) **Known Pest Host Range:** *Frankliniella panamensis* is polyphagous. Therefore, it receives a **High (3)** in this category.

- Low (1) has a very limited host range.

- Medium (2) has a moderate host range.

- High (3) has a wide host range.

- 3) **Pest Reproductive and Dispersal Potential:** *Frankliniella panamensis* is assumed to be capable of flight. It is also likely to be spread with infested plant material. Therefore, it receives a **Medium (2)** in this category.

- Low (1) does not have high reproductive or dispersal potential.

- **Medium (2) has either high reproductive or dispersal potential.**

- High (3) has both high reproduction and dispersal potential.

- 4) **Economic Impact.** *Frankliniella panamensis* is plant-feeding and polyphagous, and as such, it has the potential to damage a variety of plants, although reports of damage were not found (see Uncertainty, below). Therefore, it receives a **Medium (2)** in this category.

Economic Impact: A, B

A. The pest could lower crop yield.

B. The pest could lower crop value (includes increasing crop production costs).

C. The pest could trigger the loss of markets (includes quarantines).

D. The pest could negatively change normal cultural practices.

E. The pest can vector, or is vectored, by another pestiferous organism.

F. The organism is injurious or poisonous to agriculturally important animals.

G. The organism can interfere with the delivery or supply of water for agricultural uses.

Economic Impact Score: Medium

- Low (1) causes 0 or 1 of these impacts.

- **Medium (2) causes 2 of these impacts.**

- High (3) causes 3 or more of these impacts.

- 5) **Environmental Impact.** *Frankliniella panamensis* could (for the reason explained above, under Economic Impact) impact home/garden or ornamental plantings, and it could trigger treatments. Therefore, this thrips receives a **High (3)** in this category.

Environmental Impact: D, E

- A. The pest could have a significant environmental impact such as lowering biodiversity, disrupting natural communities, or changing ecosystem processes.
- B. The pest could directly affect threatened or endangered species.
- C. The pest could impact threatened or endangered species by disrupting critical habitats.
- D. The pest could trigger additional official or private treatment programs.**
- E. The pest significantly impacts cultural practices, home/urban gardening or ornamental plantings.**

Environmental Impact Score: High (3)

- Low (1) causes none of the above to occur.
- Medium (2) causes one of the above to occur.
- **High (3) causes two or more of the above to occur.**

Consequences of Introduction to California for *Frankliniella panamensis*: High (13)

Add up the total score and include it here.

- Low = 5-8 points
- Medium = 9-12 points
- High = 13-15 points**

- 6) **Post Entry Distribution and Survey Information:** *Frankliniella panamensis* is not known to be established in California. It receives a **Not established (0)** in this category.

- Not established (0) Pest never detected in California, or known only from incursions.**

–Low (-1) Pest has a localized distribution in California, or is established in one suitable climate/host area (region).

–Medium (-2) Pest is widespread in California but not fully established in the endangered area, or pest established in two contiguous suitable climate/host areas.

–High (-3) Pest has fully established in the endangered area, or pest is reported in more than two contiguous or non-contiguous suitable climate/host areas.

Final Score:

7) The final score is the consequences of introduction score minus the post-entry distribution and survey information score: High (13)

Uncertainty:

There is some uncertainty regarding the absence of this pest from California. It could be mistaken in the field for *Frankliniella occidentalis*, which is common in California. There is also uncertainty regarding the potential of this thrips to cause damage to agricultural plants, for the same reason. Damage caused by could have been attributed to *F. occidentalis*.

Conclusion and Rating Justification:

Frankliniella panamensis is a polyphagous plant-feeding thrips that is not known to be present in California. It is not reported to be a pest elsewhere, which does suggest it probably has little pest potential in California, but its known distribution is relatively limited and it may have different impacts on plants in new areas where it is introduced. Therefore, it is considered to pose a threat to production of ornamental and fruit/vegetable plants in greenhouses in California and possibly plants grown outdoors in warmer parts of the state as well. For these reasons, an “A” rating is justified.

References:

California Department of Food and Agriculture. Pest and damage record database. Accessed August 5, 2025:

<https://pdr.cdfa.ca.gov/PDR/pdrmainmenu.aspx>

Ebratt-Ravelo, E. E., Castro-Avila, A. P., Vaca-Urbe, J. L., Corredor-Pardo, D., Hance, T., and Goldarazena, A. 2017. Composition and structure of Thripidae populations in crops of three geographical regions in Colombia. Journal of Insect Science 19 <https://doi.org/10.1093/jisesa/iez009>

Gunawardana, D. N., Li, D., Masumoto, M., Mound, L. A., O'Donnell, C. A., and Skarlinsky, T. L. 2017. Resolving the confused identity of *Frankliniella panamensis* (Thysanoptera: Thripidae). Zootaxa 4323:125-131.

Thrips of New Zealand. Accessed August 8, 2025:
https://keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/v3/nz_thrips/the_key/key/New_Zealand_Thysanoptera/Media/Html/index.htm

Responsible Party:

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***Comment Period: 08/27/2025 through 10/11/2025**

***NOTE:**

You must be registered and logged in to post a comment. If you have registered and have not received the registration confirmation, please contact us at [permits\[@\]cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:permits[@]cdfa.ca.gov).

Comment Format:

- ❖ Comments should refer to the appropriate California Pest Rating Proposal Form subsection(s) being commented on, as shown below.

Example Comment:

Consequences of Introduction: 1. Climate/Host Interaction: [Your comment that relates to "Climate/Host Interaction" here.]

- ❖ Posted comments will not be able to be viewed immediately.

- ❖ Comments may not be posted if they:

Contain inappropriate language which is not germane to the pest rating proposal;
Contains defamatory, false, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, discriminatory or illegal material;
Violates agency regulations prohibiting sexual harassment or other forms of discrimination;
Violates agency regulations prohibiting workplace violence, including threats.

- ❖ Comments may be edited prior to posting to ensure they are entirely germane.

- ❖ Posted comments shall be those which have been approved in content and posted to the website to be viewed, not just submitted.

Pest Rating: A