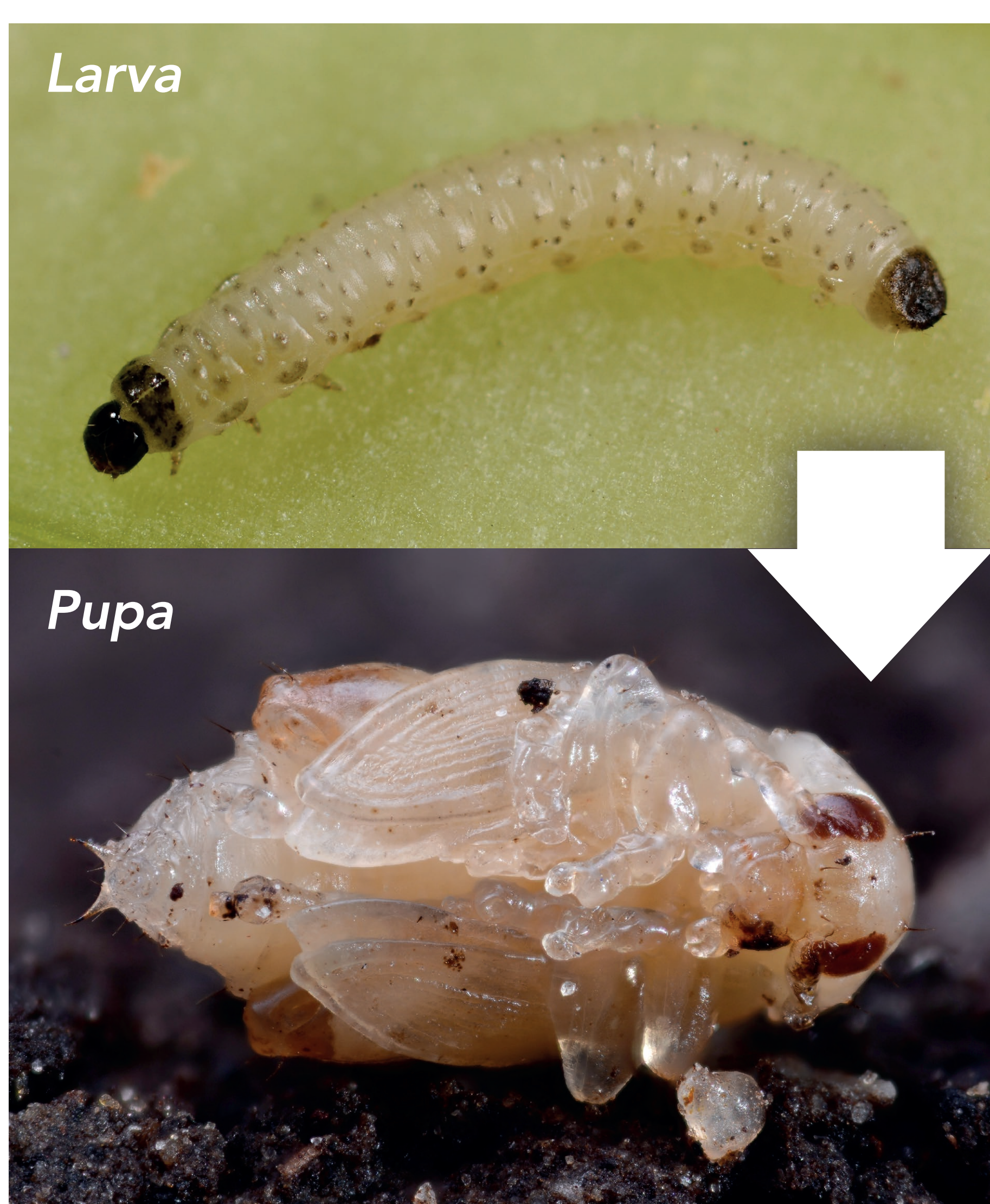


UNDERSTANDING THE LIFECYCLE OF CABBAGE STEM FLEA BEETLE

Much of the work monitoring the lifecycle of the cabbage stem flea beetle (csfb), a major UK pest in oilseed rape crops, was carried out in the late 1990s. The suggestion then was that adult beetles hatch and emerge in late spring/early summer. It is possible that the pest has evolved since then. Research indicates that rather than all the adult beetles hatching before harvest and aestivating in hedges and field margins, a significant number may still be in the soil into the autumn, possibly in a state such as pupae which may be vulnerably to cultivations?

Together we need to understand what is happening in the soil and the life cycle in general to test IPM strategies.



Adult cabbage stem flea beetle

Lifecycle of cabbage stem flea beetle (*Psylliodes chrysocephala*) and damage symptoms caused to oilseed rape (OSR) host plants:

1. adult appearance in OSR crops and feeding on cotyledons causing 'shot-holing' symptoms
2. Adults lay eggs and the larvae mine OSR petioles and then move to the main stem
3. During the spring, the larvae exit the plant and pupate in the soil...

When do they hatch?

What do they do?

Can we upset the life cycle?

That is what we are trying to find out!

Figure 1. Adult cabbage stem flea beetle numbers in an OSR in south Cambridgeshire in 2022

