

Disclosed herein are methods of controlling insect pests, in particular *Leptinotarsa* spp. which infest crop plants, and methods of providing plants resistant to such pests. Also disclosed are polynucleotides and recombinant DNA molecules and constructs useful in such methods, insecticidal compositions such as topical sprays containing insecticidal double-stranded RNAs, and solanaceous plants with improved resistance to infestation by *Leptinotarsa* spp. Further disclosed are methods of selecting target genes for RNAi-mediated silencing and control of *Leptinotarsa* spp.