

How to manage...

Fall Armyworm



1. Egg mass



2. Young caterpillars



3. Caterpillar with y on head



4. Adult moth



5. Caterpillar damage

The Fall Armyworm caterpillar is a major new pest of maize – feeding on leaves, fruits and grains.

PREVENT

- Sow at the onset of rains to avoid peak immigration of adults
- Use fertilizer or manure. Strong crops will recover better from pest infestations
- Avoid having plots of different ages
- Intercrop with pigeon pea, beans or groundnut to attract helpful insects that control Fall Armyworm
- Practice crop rotation. Plant maize one season and crops that aren't attacked - like cassava – the next

MONITOR

- Check crops twice a week after emergence
- **Eggs:** Look for cream/grey egg masses on leaves (picture 1)
- **Caterpillars:** Look for caterpillars on undersides of leaves and in funnel. They are light green to dark brown with stripes down their bodies. Large caterpillars have an upside down pale Y-shaped marking on the front (picture 3) and their second-to-last body segment has four dark spots in a square shape
- **Damage:** Look for small light coloured patches and large ragged, holes in the leaves, emerging from the funnel (picture 5)

Check other crops like sorghum, sugar cane, rice, millet and pasture grasses

Walk through your field in a zig zag shape checking 100 plants selected at random for fresh signs of damage or caterpillars

ACT

If Fall Armyworms are found on your crop act quickly. Warn your neighbours

If 10 or more plants are infested and the plant is in early growth then use chemical control. If 20 or more plants are infested and the plant is in late growth then use chemical control

If the damage is less than this then handpick and destroy egg masses and caterpillars. Spray with Neem-based products or use chilli extract, wood ash or soapy water in funnel

If using chemicals try:

- Lufenuron – brand names include Heritage 5% or Legacy

Speak to your Agricultural Extension Officer for information on these and other chemicals and how to use them

Spray in early morning or late afternoon if there is no rain.

If caterpillars can still be found 14 days following spraying, then re-spray using the same pesticide

Spray into the whorl

Ensure you wear long sleeves, trousers, mask, goggles, gloves and boots when spraying because pesticides are poisonous

Picture 4 (Adult moth) © Matt Bertone. All others © D Van Heerden. June 2018

For more information on Fall Armyworm please visit
www.fao.org/fall-armyworm/en and www.cabi.org/ISC/fallarmyworm

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