



Pest e-alerts



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Get Out and Check Pastures for Fall Armyworms!

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I have received a few reports of fall armyworms infesting grass pastures. Chris Rice, Area Agronomist in SE Oklahoma reported fall armyworms infesting a bermudagrass pasture. Dr. Rick Grantham has received several samples through the Insect Diagnostic Lab. In addition, my fall armyworm traps have collected lots of moths this past two weeks.

Mature fall armyworm larvae may be green, brown, or almost black and measure about 1 1/2 inches long. There are black and reddish brown stripes on each side of the body and four small, black spots on the dorsal side of each abdominal segment. The head capsule is mostly black and is marked with a pale, inverted "Y" on the front.



For those wishing to put up grass hay, look for caterpillars and for "window paned" or chewed leaves. Scouting for caterpillars in pasture is easy. Get a wire coat hanger, bend it into a hoop, place it on the ground, and count all sizes of caterpillars in the hoop. Take samples in several locations along the field margin as well as in the interior. The hoop covers about 2/3 of a square foot, so a threshold in pasture would be an average of two or three 1/2 inch-long larvae per hoop sample (3-4 per square foot). If the treatment threshold is exceeded, it is much easier to control them with an insecticide when they are small (less than 1/2 inches).

Keep in mind that THIS IS EARLY for us to be finding fall armyworms at these levels; typically our “August flight” is the biggest, so I encourage producers to regularly scout their sorghum and grass pastures now and keep scouting over the next month!



For control guidelines and information on registered insecticides for fall armyworm, consult OSU Fact Sheet [CR-7193](#) Management of Insect Pests in Rangeland and Pasture



Dr. Richard Grantham - Director, Plant Disease and Insect Diagnostic Laboratory

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