



Pest e-alerts



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Vol. 14, No. 42

<http://entopl.okstate.edu/Pddl/>

Sep 29, 2015

Don't Let Armyworms Waylay Your Wheat or Canola

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Heath Sanders could not have made a more prophetic statement for this Extension Entomologist than when he said: “we learn something new about canola every year”. I have learned something new every year that I have been working with canola, and this year is starting to confirm his “prophesy” once again.



This has been a banner year for fall armyworms. They built up populations early, and migrated into Oklahoma earlier than “normal”, attacking sorghum and pasture grasses. Now, they are ready to attack wheat (once it emerges) and possibly, are marching in to graze on newly emerged canola. Dr. Angela Post, OSU Extension Weeds specialist reported that there were caterpillars that appeared to be either beet armyworm or fall armyworms attacking canola. We are getting confirmation on their identity, but regardless, producers need to be vigilant and protect their fields.

I have already discussed armyworm management in wheat (see e-Pest alert <http://entopl.okstate.edu/pddl/pddl/2015/PA14-41.pdf>) but now need to alert canola producers about them attacking seedling canola and eliminating stand.

Look for “window pane” damage in young canola plants and/or cut plants. At this time, with canola so small, armyworm and cutworm caterpillars cannot be allowed the chance to reduce stand. The suggested treatment threshold is 1 or more armyworms per row-foot.

Consult CR-7194 Management of Insect and Mite Pests of Small Grains and CR-7667 Management of Insect and Mite Pests in Canola for specific insecticides that are registered for control. Keep in mind that beet and fall armyworms can sometimes be difficult to control, so vigilance is needed by follow-up scouting following an application to make sure control is achieved.

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

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