

- Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) is a highly destructive caterpillar that was first reported in Australia in February 2020
- Now found in Queensland, NT, NSW and WA, as well as Victoria despite a preference for warmer climates
- Able to travel long distances (up to 400km has been observed), have short lifecycle (30 days), a wide range of host crops and can destroy a crop overnight when pest loads are high

Worryingly, strawberry growers in Queensland are finding more frequent, and higher, populations of Fall armyworm in strawberry crops, particularly at the beginning of the winter season – did we also mention that fall armyworm love vegetative crops?



Images with thanks to: QDPI & David Jones Bugwood.org

How do I know if I have Fall Armyworm in my crops?

- **Regularly scout for symptoms** like leaf damage, frass (excrement) and look for the larvae themselves, particularly in the plant whorl and around the base
- Watch the video youtu.be/9ngeiDaVgTk for instructions to help you identify different FAW life stages
- **Destructive sampling** will allow hidden larvae to be detected in the plant parts, providing more accurate information on infestation levels
- **Use Buckets Traps, Lures & DDVP** Insecticide Cubes to monitor for FAW (bugsforbugs.com.au/product/bucket-trap/)
- **Check for eggs:** Inspect both the upper and lower surfaces of leaves, as well as stems, leaf axils, whorls, and nearby plant parts where moths may lay eggs.
- FAW eggs are usually laid in clusters (egg masses), sometimes covered with a fuzzy or scaly layer from the female moth

Chemical Control Options

- **All Berry Crops** - Current projects are tracking chemical resistance; however, at this point, **Spinosad** remains safe and effective for use (Permit 89870) and may be used on all berry groups. This product may also be used on organic crops.
- **Strawberries/Blueberries** - **Chlorantraniliprole** (Coragen) is also effective against fall armyworm. This product is on label for strawberries for the control of Cluster Caterpillar, Cotton Boilworm and Native Boilworm and there is a Minor User Permit (PER84178) for the control of Lepidopteran pests in blueberries.
- **Strawberries/Blueberries** - **Emamectin** (Proclaim) is on label for the control of Cluster Caterpillar, Heliothis, Lightbrown Apple Moth and Loopers for strawberries. There is a permit (PER85422) for **Emamectin** for the control of Lepidopteran pests in blueberries.
- **Spinsosad** is Group 5 Insecticide, **Chlorantraniliprole** is a Group 28 Insecticide and **Emamectin** is a Group 6 Insecticide. **Chemical rotations, where possible, are encouraged to prevent resistance**

Additional Considerations

- Growers report greater success when applying chemical at or after dusk
- Dawn applications are also more effective than day-time applications
- Fall armyworm is best treated when larvae are small
- Fall armyworm will make a home in a variety of crops, and will thrive in sorghum, however Fall armyworm are generally easy to treat in this crop
- **RapidAIM** provides regional reports for six areas tracking the relative populations of Fall armyworm. This resource can be accessed at rapidaim.io/rapidfaw2/#hardware

VISIT the QDPI Fall Armyworm Hub for more Information
dpi.engagementhub.com.au/fallarmyworm