FALL ARMYWORM UPDATE - (Courtesy of Seed and Grain Readiness and Response)

14th April 2023

Key Points:

- **As temperatures are decreasing, the life cycle has begun to slow, and along with a reduction in surveillance of standing maize, it is important to stay vigilant and scout harvested and any neighbouring paddocks as FAW will predate a large variety of crops. They have been observed on ryegrass and clover in a harvested maize paddock. Volunteer Maize should not be overlooked either.**
- **Any information on new host plants will be welcomed as we begin to understand overwintering capabilities.**
- **As it has become apparent that FAW is unlikely to be eradicated in NZ, the FAW response will end and we will go into Long Term Management on Friday 21st April. This will be an industry-led management transition.**
- **To date there are a total of 139 confirmed reports of FAW across NZ. There have been no new finds this week although there are some moths from existing confirmed properties being identified.**
- **FAW has been confirmed in North Canterbury sweetcorn, although in small numbers. A report on a sweetcorn crop from last year in a similar area has also been confirmed and added to the total confirmed reports.**
- **The last few weeks have seen large moth flights in Northland, highlighting the name 'FALL' Armyworm where populations build up to potentially cause devastating damage to autumn crops.**
- **AT THIS STAGE WE ARE STILL IN A RESPONSE. All finds must be reported to**https://report.mpi.govt.nz/pest or **0800 80 99 66**
- **The insecticide Sparta® is now on label for both aerial and ground applications for the control of Fall Armyworm on maize and sweetcorn crops. Consult with your advisor and avoid the use of insecticides that are ineffective on Fall Armyworm and potentially harmful to beneficial**

insects such as parasitic wasp *Cotesia sp.* which will help contain the numbers.

- **There are no negative consequences to growers for reporting, as this pest will not be controlled by removing crops.**

Photo: **Adult FAW moth identification.**

Thresholds of economic damage

Plant Health Australia provides useful guidance for this:

CROP	THRESHOLD
Maize **vegetative**	>3 larvae per plant and/or 50% of plants show signs of fresh feeding
Maize **whorl stage**	>20% of plants at whorl stage with one or more larvae and/or more than 75% of plants showing signs of feeding damage
Sweet corn **Tassel emergence**	>15% of plants infested at tassel emergence

For useful tools and guides on detection and identification consult the FAR website for the latest identification guides https://www.far.org.nz/assets/files/blog/files//8a209e4b-4ca8-5338-af06-f3b80bab18e2.pdf and MPI Website www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/50839-Fall-armyworm-fact-sheet or contact Ivan Lawrie ivan.lawrie@far.org.nz and Ash Mills ashley.mills@far.org.nz