

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

24th February 2023

Key Points:

- Events and response surrounding Cyclone Gabriella have taken priority, therefore FAW confirmations have been updated this week but understandably some regions will still not have been scouted.
- No moths in Northland traps have been found this week but larvae of varying instars are present in maize crops.
- There have been multiple reports of FAW larvae still being parasitized by the parasitic wasp *Cotesia sp.* Hopefully this can make a dent in FAW populations.
- Since 1st September 2022 there have been 119 confirmed FAW finds (this is the number of properties where the pest has been found, not the number of insects found)
- Maize and sweet corn crops in areas not effected by the cyclone, should be scouted where possible and when safe to do so.
- FAW has been confirmed on a Maize crop in Takaka. Other established noctuids continue to be present in some South Island regions.
- The insecticide Sparta is on label for use on maize and sweetcorn crops.
- We are still in a response. All finds must be reported to <https://report.mpi.govt.nz/pest> or 0800 80 99 66
- There are no negative consequences to growers for reporting, as this pest will not be controlled by removing crops.

Photo: Parasitized FAW larvae. Courtesy of Daniel Hawkins



Please contact your local advisor for details on the safe use of Sparta or any other insecticides on maize or sweetcorn.

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 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