

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

3rd March 2023

Key Points:

- The insecticide Sparta® is now on label for both aerial and ground application for control of Fall Armyworm on maize and sweetcorn crops. Consult with your advisor and avoid use of insecticides that are ineffective on Fall Armyworm and potentially harmful to beneficial insects.
- We have received questions on thresholds for economic damage. While we work on NZ-specific information, international (Australian) guidelines suggest that at whorl stages and above there should be at least 20% of plants with larvae present and/or signs of damage on 75% of plants. Scout crops (if safe) by using a “W” pattern, FAW tends to feed along rows.
- The total number of finds for 2022-23 season has now reached 127, with two of the 8 properties this week located on the West Coast of South Island.
- Only one moth was found in traps in Northland this week, with very low numbers of larvae found in the region.
- The wet condition of many of the crops have been of main concern, hence scouting and reporting may not be thorough, which is fully understandable.
- There continue to be reports of FAW larvae being parasitized by the parasitic wasp *Cotesia sp.* which will help contain the numbers.
- Maize and sweet corn crops in areas not affected by floods should only be scouted where possible and when safe to do so.
- 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.



Fall armyworm attack on volunteer maize plant in autumn 2022.

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