

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

28th April 2023

<u>Key Points:</u>

- As it became apparent that FAW is unlikely to be eradicated in NZ, the FAW response has ended and we entered into the Transition to Long-Term Management phase on Friday 21st April. This will be an industry-led management transition.
- As we have finished the response, the unwanted organism status of FAW has now been revoked, meaning it is not mandatory to report finds. However, significant observations are important, please record them and inform us.
- As temperatures are decreasing, the life cycle has begun to slow, and along with a reduction in surveillance, 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.
- Desperate mature females have been observed laying eggs on bucket traps in the North Island. In the absence of maize, egg masses can be on a range of structures, not just on vegetation.
- Any information on new host plants will be welcomed as we begin to understand overwintering capabilities and green bridges.
- There is a total of 139 confirmed reports of FAW across NZ.
- The insecticide Sparta® is on label for aerial and ground applications for controlling 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.



Photo: In the absence of Maize, FAW females have been known to lay eggs in a variety of places, including traps.

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