

AGRICULTURE

Scouting for Fall Armyworms

In the last two weeks I have started seeing the presence of fall armyworms infesting many bermuda grass

pastures in Pittsburg County. Mature fall armyworm larvae may be green, brown, or almost black and measure about 1 inch long. There are black and red-dish brown

stripes on each side of the body and four small, black spots on the dorsal side of each abdominal segment. The head capsule is mostly black and is marked with a pale, inverted "Y" on the front.

For those wishing to put up grass hay, look for caterpillars and for "window paned" or chewed leaves. Scouting for caterpillars in the pasture is easy. Take a wire coat hanger, bend it into a hoop, place it on the ground, and count all sizes of caterpillars in the hoop. Take samples in several locations along the field margin as well

as in the interior of the field. The hoop covers about 2/3 of a square foot, so a threshold in the pasture would be an average of two or three inch-long larvae per hoop sample (3-4 per square foot). If the treatment threshold is exceeded, it is much easier to control them with an insecticide when they are small (less than an inch).

Keep in mind that this is early for us to be finding fall armyworms at these levels; typically our "August flight" is the biggest, so I encourage producers to regularly scout their grass pastures now and keep scouting over the rest of the month.

For control guidelines contact your local OSU Extension office or consult OSU Extension Fact Sheet CR-7193.

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