

Integrated crop management – Maize

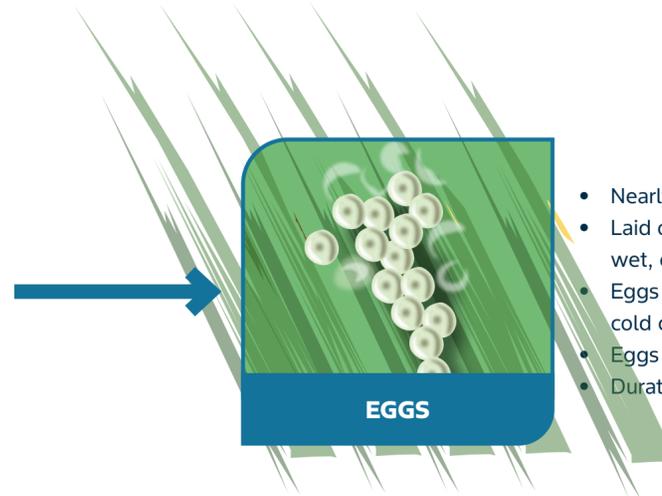


Life cycle of Cutworm



ADULT

- Adults are nocturnal, emerging to mate and lay eggs.
- Adult moths are quite large, with a wingspan of 38-42 mm.
- Forewings of male moths are often pale, whereas females are greyish-brown.
- Large bean markings on the wings of moths.

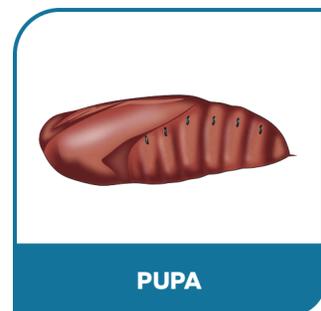


EGGS

- Nearly 1000 eggs per female moth can be laid.
- Laid on soil surface/between upper soil particles, however, if soil is wet, eggs can be laid on plant stems.
- Eggs are laid during autumn or winter and can withstand moist and cold conditions.
- Eggs are whitish yellow and become darker as they develop.
- Duration: Eggs hatch in 4-7 days in summer or 10-14 days in winter.

Pupal phase: 14 – 17 days

- Pupae are dark brown, almost black in colour.
- Approximately 15-19 mm long.
- Larvae form earthen cells and pupate inside them beneath the soil surface.



PUPA

Life cycle of a cutworm (*Agrotis spp.*)

Period from egg to moth:
 Summer: 60 days
 Winter: 120 days
 Generations: 3-4 per year

Larval period 42-120 days

Temperature has a major impact on the larval period. During summer, it can be as short as 42-56 days and during winter, it can be as long as 100-120 days.

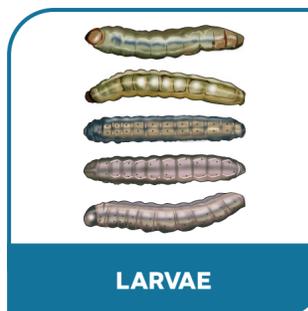
- Larvae are dark grey to brown.
- Newly hatched larvae are 3 mm long and can grow up to 39 mm.

Larval period 42-120 days

Small larvae (L1-L3) mainly stay above ground. Rosette forming weeds provide shelter and serve as a food source to small larvae, whereas large larvae (L4-L6) seek shelter within the soil, only emerging from the soil when seeking food.



DAMAGED PLANT



LARVAE

Cutworms

(*Agrotis spp.*)

Cutworm larvae are characterised by their dirty grey and brown appearance and are especially active at night when they cut off seedlings at the soil line. Overwintering weeds are the driver behind high cutworm infestations because it serves as a food source and provide shelter to larvae. The control of overwintering weeds will significantly reduce the level of infestation early in the planting season.

