

How to manage...

# Fall armyworm



1. Egg mass



2. Young caterpillars



3. Caterpillar with y on head



4. Adult moth



5. Caterpillar damage

Fall Armyworm is a migratory caterpillar which is causing severe damage to maize, rice, pastures and over 80 other plant species.

## PREVENT

- Plough deeply to expose young pupae to the surface of the soil
- Sow early to avoid peak immigration of adults
- Cut weeds and destroy all crop residues because they provide shelter and food to the caterpillar

## MONITOR

- Set up pheromone traps at the beginning of the growing season
- Look for young caterpillars on the undersides of leaves and the whorl. They are light green to dark brown with longitudinal stripes
- Look for patches of small “window pane” holes to large ragged and elongated holes in the leaves emerging from the whorl

It is a Fall Armyworm if:

- It has a dark head with an upside down pale Y-shaped marking on the front – see picture 3

## ACT

- Handpick and destroy egg masses and caterpillars.
- Spray a mixture of water with sugar to attract ants and wasps that eliminate the young caterpillars.
- Spray with:
  - Neem-based products
  - Biopesticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* variety Aizawai (e.g. Ecopel or Bypel1) in the late afternoon
  - If you use chemical pesticides, use a different sort each time. For example if you first spray with Diflubenzuron, then for the second spray use a different pesticide such as Spinetoram
- Insecticides and biopesticides are only effective on young caterpillars. In maize, spray before they enter the ears or funnel.

Picture 4 (Adult moth) © Matt Bertone. All others © D Van Heerden.

For more info on Fall armyworm please visit:  
[www.plantwise.org/fallarmyworm](http://www.plantwise.org/fallarmyworm)

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE