

# Wisconsin Crop Manager

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Black cutworm



Black cutworm damage;  
below ground feeding



Black cutworm damage;  
leaf feeding

## Where to Check for Black Cutworms and Armyworms

Bryan Jensen, IPM Program

By now many of you have heard of, or at least thought about, the possibility of an early black cutworm and true armyworm migration. Many states to our south have posted newsletter articles indicating high trap catches. Locally, WDATCP's Wisconsin Pest Bulletin newsletter has reported significant black cutworm catches in their southwest Wisconsin pheromone trap network and high armyworm counts are also being reported. Additionally, several people have observed heavy nighttime flights of adult armyworms as well as reports of adult in their daytime resting sites. Although these observations are not a foolproof predictor of field damage, they are an excellent reminder that we should be scouting corn earlier than we would normally expect. If you need more proof, the Wisconsin Pest Bulletin is predicting black cutworms could be cutting corn as early as May 15! Concentrating your early season scouting efforts can pay off. Knowing where to look can give you an early indication of the potential for damage.

Many people have commented on the number of winter annual growing in fields this spring. These areas are attractive oviposition sites for black cutworms. In general, low growing weeds are attractive; however, favorite species include the chickweeds, shepherd's purse and yellow rocket. Larvae may hatch prior to corn emergence and feed on these weeds for a period of time. Controlling these weeds with herbicides and/or tillage can then concentrate the damage on corn. Soybean residue also creates an attractive site to lay eggs and is often overlooked when spot-checking for cutworm damage.



Black cutworm damage; cut plant

Armyworm adults prefer lush foliage, especially grasses, to lay eggs. During the spring migration, cover crops and spring killed alfalfa make great oviposition sites that concentrate egg laying into isolated fields. Larvae may, or may not, begin feeding on the cover crop before switching to corn. Small grains may also be attractive egg laying sites. Don't forget to check winter wheat for armyworm damage as well.



Armyworm larvae



Armyworm damage

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## Wisconsin Pest Bulletin for April 19, 2012

The second issue of the Wisconsin Pest Bulletin from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is now available. The Wisconsin Pest Bulletin provides up-to-date pest population estimates, pest distribution and development data, pest survey and inspection results, alerts to new pest finds in the state, and forecasts for Wisconsin's most damaging plant pests.

[Click here](#) to view the issue.

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## Vegetable Crop Update #5 with Supplement Now Available

Wisconsin Vegetable Crop Update #5 is now available. This update includes a supplement regarding potato early blight. [Click here](#) to view this update.

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## Wheat Scouting Update and Disease Thresholds

Shawn Conley

A check of our research studies found that the wheat crop is at the Feekes 6 and 7 growth stages (first and second nodes) across the state. This is an important time to be out in the wheat and scouting to determine if the use of a foliar fungicide will be needed as we move into flag leaf emergence (Feekes 8). The flag leaf is the most important leaf, accounting for upwards of 50% or more of the final yield and a goal with the use of a foliar fungicide is to protect this leaf. Most of the questions to date have been about powdery mildew. Susceptible varieties are showing significant disease pressure as warm March temperatures contributed to lush vegetative growth and in some cases pre-jointing lodging.

Looking ahead, there exist some thresholds as you scout at Feekes 7 and 8 to determine if a foliar fungicide may be warranted.

At **Feekes 7**, the thresholds are:

- Powdery mildew: check the uppermost leaf - the threshold is an average of five pustules per leaf.
- Wheat leaf rust: check any leaf - the threshold is an average of one pustule per leaf.
- Septoria leaf blotch: check the uppermost leaf - the threshold is 25% of the leaves having expanding blotches

At **Feekes 8**, the thresholds are:

- Powdery mildew: check from the flag-2 leaf (2nd leaf below the flag leaf) and upward - the threshold is an average of five pustules per leaf on the flag-2 leaf.
- Wheat leaf rust: check from the flag-3 (3rd leaf below the flag leaf) and upward - the threshold is an average of one pustule per leaf on the flag-3 leaf.

- Septoria leaf blotch: check from the flag-2 and upward - the threshold is 25% of the leaves having blotches

If you note disease in the lower canopy but not on any of the leaves discussed above, consider increasing the frequency of your scouting to determine if there is evidence of new pustules or blotches moving into the upper canopy.

For further information regarding factors to consider for determining the need for a foliar fungicide recommendation, please check [here](#).

For information regarding the efficacy of several foliar fungicides against different wheat diseases, please check [here](#).

Results across our different studies the past few years have indicated that the best response to a foliar fungicide application has occurred when powdery mildew was the target and the wheat variety was susceptible. When the wheat variety was resistant to powdery mildew, we have not seen a consistent response, if at all.

## UW-Extension/Madison Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic (PDDC) Update

Brian Hudelson, Ann Joy, Amanda Zimmerman and Adam Greene, Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic

The PDDC receives samples of many plant samples from around the state. The following diseases/disorders have been identified at the PDDC since January 1, 2012:

PLANT/ SAMPLE TYPE	DISEASE/ DISORDER	PATHOGEN	COUNTY
<b>FRUIT CROPS</b>			
Apple	Cytospora Canker <a href="#">Root Rot</a>	<i>Cytospora</i> sp. <i>Fusarium</i> sp., <i>Phytophthora</i> sp.	Dodge, La Crosse Dane
<b>VEGETABL ES</b>			
Cucumber	Unidentified Viral Disease	Unknown	Dane
Pea	Root Rot	<i>Pythium</i> sp., <i>Rhizoctonia</i> sp.	Columbia
Potato (Tubers)	Elephant Hide Fusarium Dry Rot Leak Pit Scab	None <i>Fusarium sambucinum</i> <i>Pythium</i> sp. <i>Streptomyces scabies</i>	Dunn Dunn, Portage Portage Dunn
Tomato	Rhizoctonia Stem Canker	<i>Rhizoctonia solani</i>	Clark

For additional information on plant diseases and their control, visit the PDDC website at [pddc.wisc.edu](http://pddc.wisc.edu).

