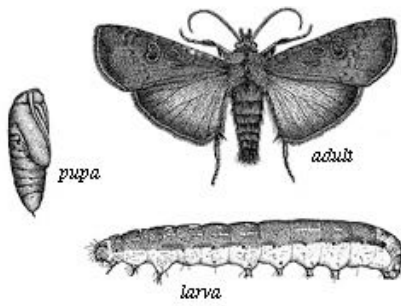


CUTWORMS

By Eric Day and Alexandra Spring



Life stages of Cutworms

DESCRIPTION: Many species. Cutworms are dull gray, brown, or black, and may be striped or spotted. They are stout, soft-bodied and smooth, and up to 1 and 1/4 inches long. They curl up tightly when disturbed.

COMMON HOST PLANT(S): Tomato, pepper, cabbage, peas, beans, and squash.

DAMAGE: Cut off plants above, at, or below soil surface. Some

cutworms feed on leaves, buds, or fruits; others feed on the underground portions of plants. Particularly destructive to early season plantings.

DISTRIBUTION: Throughout United States.

CULTURAL CONTROL: Place a stiff 3-inch cardboard collar around the stems; allow it to extend about 1 inch into the soil and protrude 2 inches above the soil; clear the stem by about 1/2 inch. Till garden so that weedy growth is not present in the spring.

ORGANIC/BIOLOGICAL CONTROL: *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt is sold under various trade names and formulations) will kill cutworms and is safe. Worms get sick the first day and die later.

CHEMICAL CONTROL: If cultural control fails, follow the label instructions and precautions for pre-planting treatment of cutworm for Beans, Beets, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Collards, Cucumbers, Endive, Kale, Lettuce, Lima Beans, Melons, Muskmelons, Onions, Parsley, Parsnips, Peas, Peppers, Potatoes, Radishes, Snap Beans, and Sweet Corn.



Bronzed Cutworm. David Cappaert, Michigan State University, Bugwood.org



Black cutworm. W.M. Hantsbarger, Bugwood.org