



Industry update #4 – fall armyworm

28 July 2020

Situation update

The pest fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) has been detected in Geraldton.

A single adult moth was collected in a pheromone trap near Moonyoonooka monitored by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), with the detection confirmed on 23 July. No larvae or feeding damage has been found at this time.

This follows detections earlier in the year in Kununurra, Broome and Carnarvon.

In May 2020, the National Management Group agreed with the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests that fall armyworm was not technically feasible to eradicate.

This is due to the pest's reproductive capacity, ability to fly long distances, wide host range, spread of known infestations, and potential for re-infestation from Australia's northern neighbours.

Assisting industry to manage fall armyworm and minimise the impact is the priority.

WA activity

DPIRD has deployed approximately 50 pheromone (lure) traps throughout northern Western Australia, including Kununurra, Broome, the Pilbara, Carnarvon, and Geraldton. These complement existing traps in Kununurra, which have operated since October 2019.

In addition, DPIRD has established, in collaboration with local grower groups, an extensive trapping program of approximately 45 traps spread throughout the Grainbelt. There have been no detections to date in the Grainbelt traps.

These surveillance trapping networks are assisting in providing early warning advice to industry about the presence of fall armyworm as it potentially migrates further south.

DPIRD continues to liaise with the Australian Government, state and territory governments and industry groups which are collaborating to assist in preparing for and minimising the impact of this fall armyworm as it becomes more broadly established.

Chemical permits

The Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) has issued a number of permits for the use of certain chemicals for the control of fall armyworm.

More information is available from the [APVMA Online Portal](https://portal.apvma.gov.au/permits) at <https://portal.apvma.gov.au/permits>. Search for 'fall armyworm'.

The permits should be read in conjunction with the relevant product label for information on withholding periods and other critical comments.



Biosecurity and reporting

Horticultural and grain growers are encouraged to regularly monitor their crops for the presence of fall armyworm larvae.

On-farm biosecurity measures should be in place to protect crops from pests and diseases. More information is available at farmbiosecurity.com.au.

Growers and agronomists are encouraged to report suspect caterpillars or unexpected symptoms in the field to DPIRD via the Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS) on +61 (0)8 9368 3080 or email padis@dpird.wa.gov.au or via the [MyPestGuide™ Reporter app](#).

Further information and enquiries

More information is available on the [DPIRD website](http://agric.wa.gov.au) at agric.wa.gov.au. Search for 'fall armyworm in Western Australia'.

General enquiries or suspect reports can be made to PaDIS.
Call +61 (0)8 9368 3080 or email padis@dpird.wa.gov.au

WA industry enquiries can be directed to:

- Horticulture - Helen Spafford, Senior Research Scientist +61 (0)8 9166 4074
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