

Fall armyworm (FAW) life cycle (approx. 24 days)

Day 1-3: Creamy yellow coloured egg masses on undersides of lower leaves (100-200)



Day 3-6: Emerging first instar larvae



Windowing by 1st-2nd instar larvae



Ballooning (silken threads caught by the wind)



Day 6-14: Shot holes in leaves



Hidden in the whorl, fresh frass (poo plug)



Approx. after day 14: the fully grown caterpillar will drop to the ground



The caterpillar burrows 2-8 cm into the soil before pupating. In heavy top soils, the caterpillar will likely cover in leaf debris and then pupate.



Not real size

Approx. after 8-9 days: the adult moth emerges to restart the cycle



Figure 6. Typical adult male fall armyworm, *Spodoptera frugiperda* (J.E. Smith). Photograph by Lyle J. Buss, University of Florida.



Figure 7. Typical adult female fall armyworm, *Spodoptera frugiperda* (J.E. Smith). Photograph by Lyle J. Buss, University of Florida.

FALL ARMYWORM (FAW) ID

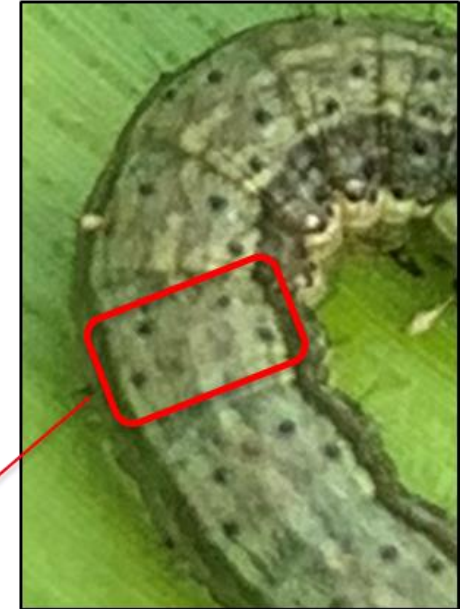
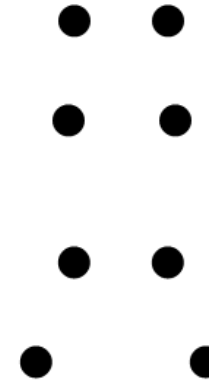
FALL ARMYWORM



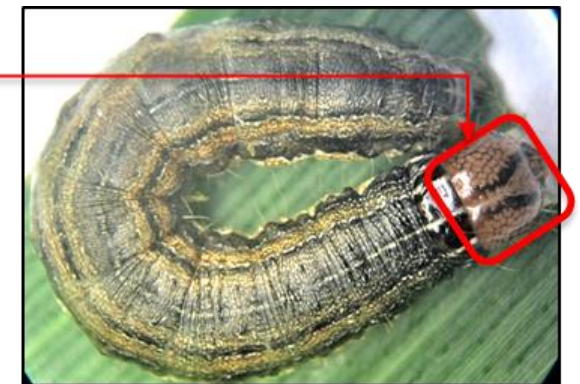
Note the clear pale inverted “Y” at the back of its head

The prominent **dark spots in a square pattern** on the second last body segment.

Also, **dark spots in a trapezoid pattern** on its other body segments.



FALSE ARMYWORM have a dark inverted “Y” with the base Y stalks not touching.



Important facts

- Regular crop scouting is essential
- Important to control at early growth stages before caterpillars “get smarter” and hide into hard-to-reach areas
- FAW will not survive where temperatures drop below 10°C and remain constant
- Favourite food: Maize, then sorghum. Overseas information suggests that it could also feed on legumes, sugarcane and grasses if their favourite food source is removed
- Chemical rotation is key to limit exposure to the same chemical group in consecutive generations
- Permits often change so check the APVMA PUBCRIS web site frequently
- Note the different rates and withholding periods for different crops
- Be aware that pesticides from groups 1 and 3 are very hard on beneficials and very bad for Integrated Pest Management (IPM)