

Kansas State University Department of Entomology Newsletter

For Agribusinesses, Applicators, Consultants, Extension Personnel & Homeowners

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July 26, 2018 No 14

Sorghum Update

Sorghum Update

Chinch bugs continue to feed and develop all around north central Kansas. However, growing conditions have improved significantly and thus the plants are much better able to tolerate this feeding.

As sorghum reaches the whorl stage corn leaf aphids are becoming more common. These aphids may cause some concern as their honeydew production will occasionally be so thick and sticky as to retard the heads extending up from the whorl. This is not typically a field-wide problem, just a few places or plants in a field and these aphids are a good source of nutrition for beneficials.



Photo by JR Ewing

In addition, as sorghum leaves grow out of the whorl stage, they are showing signs of feeding. Fall armyworms have been feeding as small larvae within the whorl and as plants grow out and the leaves unfurl, these leaves have a very ragged appearance. Many of these 'ragworms' have finished feeding and are now pupating in the soil. Thus, spraying is not necessary as the damage is done. Even if the worms are still in the whorl, they will not be contacted by the spray. This whorl-stage leaf feeding doesn't negatively impact the plant, or yield. There will probably be a least one more generation of fall armyworms and these may be more problematic if they start feeding in the head between flowering and soft dough stages. Feeding on these developing kernels is generally considered to cost 5% loss/worm/head.

Photo by JR Ewing



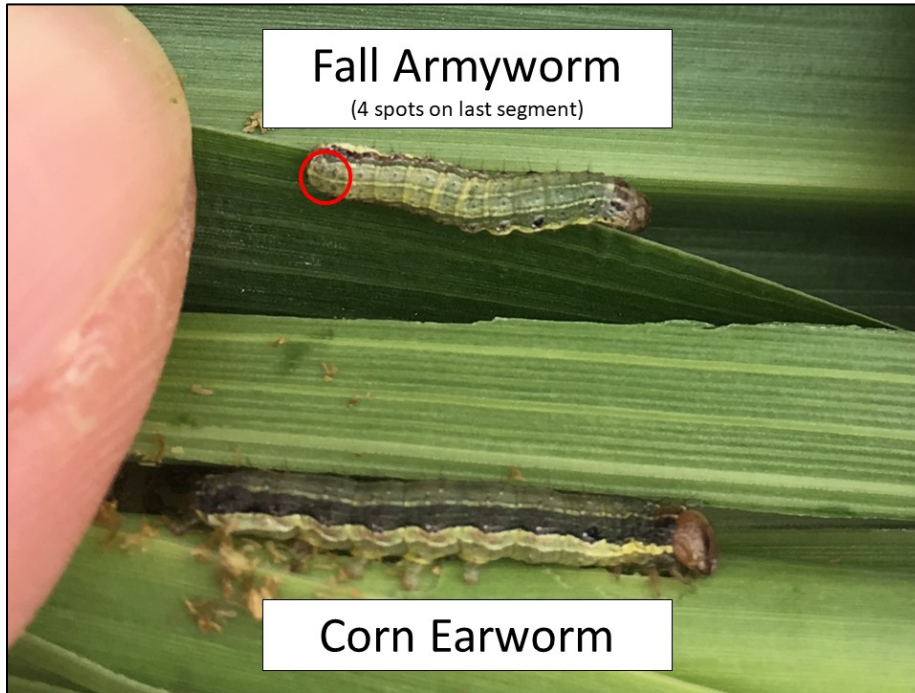
Mature fall armyworm feeding in whorl



Fall Armyworm

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For more information regarding sorghum insect pest management please refer to the KSU 2018 Sorghum Insect Management Guide: <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf742.pdf>

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Sincerely,

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Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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