

Agronomic Directions

A Newsletter of Cornelius Seed® Read it. Profit.

June 3, 2014

www.corneliusseed.com

1-800-218-1862

Black Cutworm Scouting 2014

Adapted from ISU's Integrated Crop Management News

Black cutworm scouting should be under way for 2014. Scouting for larvae helps to determine if an insecticide application will be a cost effective solution. Predicted cutting dates are based on actual and historical degree day data (Figure 1).

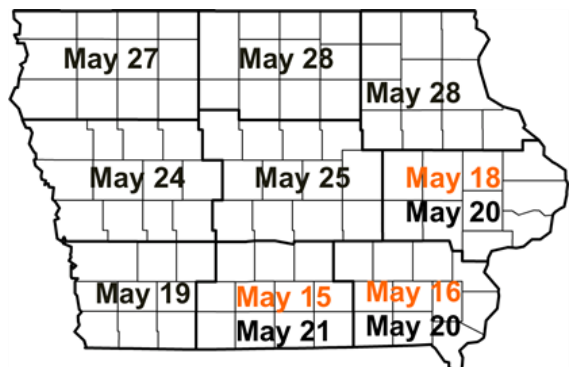


Figure 1. Estimated black cutworm cutting dates for each Iowa climate division based on peak flights of moths occurring in April 2014. The dates in orange represent estimated cutting dates from an early peak flight. Scouting should begin, and continue from, these dates as moths continue to arrive in the state.

Higher risk fields include those that are poorly drained and low lying, those next to natural vegetation, and those that are weedy or with reduced tillage. Late-planted corn can be smaller and more vulnerable to larvae feeding as well. Our hybrids provide suppression (from our 250 rate of seed treatment) or control of black cutworm, but young plants can still be clipped by larvae.

Fields should be scouted for larvae weekly until corn reaches V5. Examine 50 corn plants in five areas in each field. Look for plants with wilting, leaf discoloration and damage, or those that are missing or cut. Note areas with suspected damage and return later to assess further damage. Larvae can be found by carefully excavating the soil around a damaged plant.

Common thresholds for seedling, V2, V3 and V4 stage corn plants are 2, 3, 5 and 7 plants cut out of 100, respectively. But with corn price and input fluctuations, a dynamic threshold may be useful. An Excel spreadsheet with the calculations built in can be downloaded [here](#) from the ICM's article (scroll to the Thresholds section) and can be used to help management decisions regarding black cutworm.



Figure 2. Black cutworm larvae have light grey to black, grainy skin.

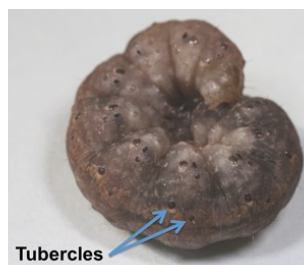


Figure 3. Black cutworms are best distinguished by the dark tubercles on the middle of the back. On each body segment, the pair of tubercles closest to the head is about one-third to one-half the size of the pair nearest to the abdomen.



Figure 4. Black cutworm larval damage usually starts above the soil surface. Leaf feeding (left) can occur. As larvae mature, they can cut plants (right). Photos copyright Marlin Rice.

Current corn and soybean progress reports for week ending June 1, 2014

	% Corn Planted	% Corn Emerged
Illinois	98	91
Iowa	99	89
Minnesota	93	69
Wisconsin	86	52

	% Soybeans Planted	% Soybeans Emerged
Illinois	85	59
Iowa	94	63
Minnesota	75	38
Wisconsin	69	28