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# Black Cutworm Monitoring 2015: We Need Your Help!

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# Black Cutworm Monitoring 2015: We Need Your Help!

## **Abstract**

Black cutworm moths arrive in Iowa with spring storms each year. These moths lay eggs in fields and the emerging black cutworm larvae cut seedling corn. The sporadic nature of this pest makes scouting essential to determine if management is needed. To make scouting easier, the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program at Iowa State University relies on a network of farmers, agronomists, and Extension staff to place and monitor traps for the adult moths (Fig. 1). The IPM Program uses this moth capture data and temperature data to estimate when farmers are most likely to see larvae in their fields.

## **Keywords**

Plant Pathology and Microbiology

## **Disciplines**

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### Black Cutworm Monitoring 2015: We Need Your Help!

By Adam Sisson, Integrated Pest Management

Black cutworm moths arrive in Iowa with spring storms each year. These moths lay eggs in fields and the emerging black cutworm larvae cut seedling corn. The sporadic nature of this pest makes scouting essential to determine if management is needed. To make scouting easier, the [Integrated Pest Management \(IPM\) Program](#) at Iowa State University relies on a network of farmers, agronomists, and Extension staff to place and monitor traps for the adult moths (Fig. 1). The IPM Program uses this moth capture data and temperature data to estimate when farmers are most likely to see larvae in their fields.



**Figure 1. Checking a pheromone-baited trap for black cutworm moths.**  
*Photo courtesy Clarke McGrath.*

This program is possible because of the volunteers who place traps and check them for cutworm moths. This is why we are asking farmers, agribusiness, and others to help out. The more data that is collected across the state, better scouting estimates can be produced.

Volunteers will be sent a cutworm trap to assemble and then monitor every other day. They will record the number of moths and post the data at least once a week. Black cutworm monitoring starts near the beginning of April and ends around the first part of June.

To become a cutworm cooperator, email [bcutworm@iastate.edu](mailto:bcutworm@iastate.edu) with the volunteer's mailing address and questions you may have. Send your request no later than March 27 to allow enough time for shipping.

This year, there is also a unique opportunity for those planting non-Bt corn or

non-BT corn with a rye cover crop. Mike Dunbar, a research entomologist at ISU, is looking for farmers planting non-Bt corn in 2015 who would be willing to let him scout their cornfields for black cutworm and armyworm. Fields would be scouted weekly from early April through the end of May using pheromone traps and visual counts of insects. Any relevant information about pest insects will be conveyed to the farmers. An acceptable field could be just a block or structured refuge of non-Bt corn. He is also looking to scout non-Bt corn in 2015 with a rye cover crop in that same field.

To participate in this non-Bt and rye cover crop field scouting opportunity, contact Mike Dunbar at [dunbar@iastate.edu](mailto:dunbar@iastate.edu) or 443-362-0875.

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