

Issue 4 – June 12, 2025

# Manitoba Crop Pest Update



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## Summary

**Insects:** Some high populations of **cutworms** in dry beans and canola were found in the Central region over the past week. Redbacked and dingy cutworm seem to be the dominant species. **Wireworms** and their damage were reported from cereal fields in the Northwest, Southwest and Central regions. **Seedcorn maggots** and their feeding were noticed in corn in the Central region. There have been some foliar insecticide applications for **flea beetles**, but some are commenting on the canola escaping economic damage in many fields this year. Some of the canola is starting to grow past the more susceptible stages. Notching from adults of the **pea leaf weevil** has been quite noticeable in many pea and faba bean fields in the Northwest, Southwest and Central regions. Trap counts for diamondback moth have increased in some regions over the past few weeks, but larvae are still at trace levels.

**Weeds:** Post-emergent weed control applications continue and are complete for earliest seeded cereals. Spraying corn and soybeans has started. Recent rains and warm temperatures have seen weeds flush, but crop growth is vigorous and can hopefully keep ahead of late-emerging weeds. Warm season weeds like pigweeds are growing rapidly and its crucial to be able to identify which pigweed(s) are present.

## Entomology

### Cutworms

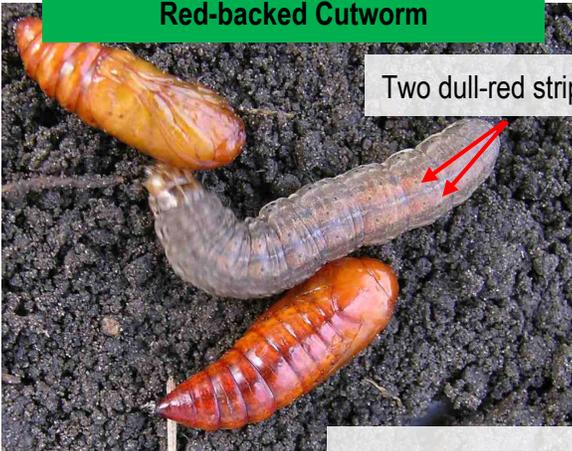
There have been reports of cutworm feeding and control in several crops so far this year. While populations have been high in some fields, overall the number of fields that have had high levels is not as great as a few years ago. Redbacked and dingy cutworm once again seem to be the dominant species in a lot of these fields with redbacked cutworm.

As we get into mid-June, and the cutworms get into their later larval instars, decision making regarding the economics of control gets tricky. Determining the stage of larval development can be helpful. Small larvae pose the greatest potential for damage as they still have to feed and grow. Once most larvae have reached lengths of 30 to 35mm, most of their feeding may have already occurred, which may reduce the odds of foliar insecticides being economical. If high levels of cutworms are present, you will want to assess the level of recent crop damage, as the older larvae can do considerable feeding before the feeding stops and they start preparing for pupation.

Cutworms will sometimes be most abundant in patches or a specific area of a field. Scout a few areas of the field to determine if feeding appears to be patchy or mainly to a specific area of the field. Sometimes control is only needed for specific patches and not a full field.

Report compiled by John Gavloski, Kim Brown  
Entomologist, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture  
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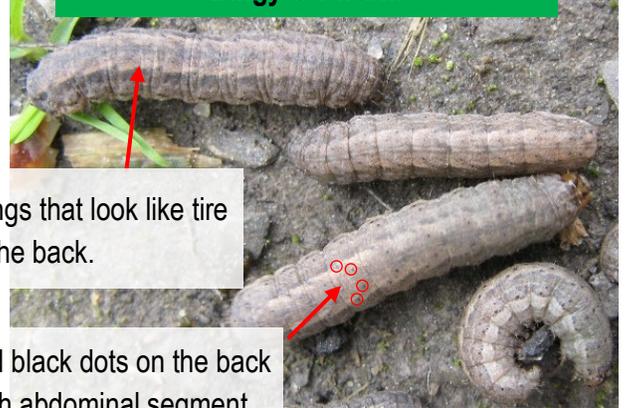
### Red-backed Cutworm



Two dull-red stripes along length of back

Series of somewhat diagonal markings that look like tire tracks, or form "V's" on the back.

### Dingy Cutworm



Four equal-sized black dots on the back surface of each abdominal segment

The following factsheet on “Cutworms in Field Crops” explains identification of common species in Manitoba, lifecycle, monitoring, control, and presents a table of thresholds for cutworms in various crops:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/cutworms-in-field-crops.pdf>

## Weeds

### Scouting for Waterhemp

As warm season weeds like pigweeds continue to emerge be diligent in scouting so you know which pigweeds you have. Realistically you could see several species of pigweeds present in every field. Redroot pigweed is the most



Mixed population of redroot pigweed and waterhemp

common pigweed and most of us are very familiar with this weed. It will have hairs on the stems and petioles (stems of the leaves) and will have a slightly rough, bumpy feel. Many other pigweeds, including waterhemp and Palmer amaranth, have very few or zero hairs on stems and petioles, and feel very smooth. Other pigweed species like prostrate pigweed, tumble pigweed and Powell’s pigweed have smooth stems, but they are much less cause for concern than aggressive pigweeds like waterhemp and Palmer amaranth. Prostate pigweed, tumble pigweed and Powell’s are much less common and it would be unusual to have a large infestation of these weeds. If you suspect you have pigweeds other than redroot pigweed contact your local agronomist and

Manitoba Agriculture to assist you in identifying the species. Refer to previous editions of the 2025 Crop Pest Update to help identify leaf and cotyledon shape of waterhemp versus redroot pigweed. Picture below (left) is a closeup of the underside of waterhemp (note it is smooth and hairless) and below (right) is top view of waterhemp (note the elongated leaf shape – it’s longer and skinnier than redroot pigweed leaves are).



Underside (left) and top view (right) of waterhemp

## Forecasts

### Diamondback moth

A network of pheromone-baited traps are being monitored across Manitoba in May and June to determine how early and in what levels populations of diamondback moth occur. Diamondback moths have been found in 71 out of 89 traps that counts were reported from. There have been some higher cumulative counts in traps in the Northwest region, and moderate counts in the Central and Eastern regions. Counts have been low so far in the Southwest and Interlake regions.

The highest cumulative trap count so far is 253 from a trap north of Bowsman in the Northwest region. It is good to be looking for larvae of diamondback moth when scouting canola fields. Only trace amounts of larvae have been noticed so far.

**Table 1.** Highest cumulative counts of diamondback moth (*Plutella xylostella*) in pheromone-baited traps for five agricultural regions in Manitoba as of June 12, 2025.

Lower Risk: 0-25    Elevated Risk: 26-200    Higher level of moth catch: 200+

Region	Nearest Town	Trap Count
Northwest	North Bowsman	253
	Togo	119
	Bowsman	115
	West Bowsman	105
Southwest	Roseland	9
	Pierson	6
	Melita	4
	Hartney, Ninga	3
Central	Horndean	153

← Highest cumulative count

	Rosenfeld	116
	Brunkild	80
	St. Joseph	79
Eastern	Ste. Anne	36
	Anola	8
	Tourond	4
	St. Malo	2
Interlake	Fisher Branch	20
	Warren	14
	Clandeboye, East Selkirk	13
	Ledwyn	12

Highest trap counts of diamondback moth in each region and a monitoring summary are updated weekly on the Insect Page of the Manitoba Agriculture website at:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/diamondback-moth-trap-results.pdf>

Counts are normally updated every Thursday morning, but the website may be updated more frequently if higher counts come in.

### True armyworms

Larvae of armyworms (*Mythimna unipuncta*), sometimes also called true armyworms, can cause significant feeding injury to cereals and forage grasses when levels are abundant. Adult moths of armyworms migrate to Manitoba in the spring from overwintering sites from the southern US. A network of pheromone-baited traps are being monitored from early-May until late-July to determine how early and in what levels populations of armyworms have arrive.



Counts have generally been low so far. Of the 20 traps with counts reported from so far, armyworms have been found in all traps, but mainly at lower levels.

**Table 2.** Highest cumulative counts of armyworms in pheromone-baited traps for agricultural regions in Manitoba as of June 11, 2025.

Region	Nearest Town	Trap Count
Southwest	Lyleton	19
	Brandon	12
	Pierson	8
	Melita	5
Central	Arnaud	2
	Ermerson	1
Interlake	Riverton	94
	Fisher Branch	54
	Famnes	45
	Washow Bay	18
	Shorncliffe	15

← Highest cumulative count

The higher numbers noted for Riverton and Fisher Branch are mainly due to counts of 53 and 52 respectively during the week of May 11-17.

Those scouting cereals and forage grasses in the Interlake may want to check to see what armyworm larval levels are like in their fields. Armyworm larvae have been noticed, but so far there have been no reports of economic levels.

A map showing armyworm counts from Manitoba, Eastern Canada, and several Northeast U.S. states is available at:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7164d23d488246d198dcf7a07d8c9021/page/Home/?views=Welcome>.

Go to the link "TAW". The "Play" button at the bottom can be set so the map automatically advances (click middle arrow), or set to "Stop" and the arrows at either side of the button are used to go forward or backward a week at a time.

## Identification Quiz

**Question:** This larva was found while digging in the soil. What is it?



**Answer:** This is a therevid larva, the adults of which are known as stiletto flies. There are 11 species of stiletto flies in Manitoba. These snake-like larvae are very mobile and move through sand and loose soil with considerable speed. Therevid larvae are voracious predators that feed on a variety of insect immatures including cutworms and grasshopper eggs but prefer beetle larvae, especially wireworms, white grubs (scarab beetle larvae), and darkling beetle larvae. In a lab setting, a single almost mature larvae of *Ozodiceromya argentata* destroyed an average of 3, but up to 9, sugar-beet wireworms (*Limonius californicus*) over a period of 50 days. Therevid larvae may sometimes be confused for wireworms. One way to tell them apart is that therevid larvae lack legs while wireworms have three pairs of legs behind the head. One of the easiest ways to identify a therevid larvae is through its behaviour as they thrash around when disturbed.

To **report observations** on insects, plant pathogens, or weeds that may be of interest or importance to farmers and agronomists in Manitoba, please send messages to one of the following Manitoba Agriculture Pest Management Specialists.

John Gavloski, Entomologist (204) 750-0594

Kim Brown, Weed Specialist (431) 344-0239