



European Corn Borer

Overview

The European corn borer or ECB (*Ostrinia nubilalis*) can cause yield losses. Insect-resistant transgenic corn hybrids can help control ECB populations.

What you should know

- ECB eggs are “glued” to undersides of leaves in clusters of a dozen or more individual eggs. Clusters resemble fish scales.
- ECB larvae are whitish-pink with dark spots on the sides and top and a dark brown to black head. It is the larval (borer) stage that causes damage to crops.
- Evidence of corn borer infestation appears a few days after eggs hatch. Look for pin holes in leaves and sawdust-like frass (excrement) on damaged leaves, or noticeable chewing damage and frass in the whorl.
- Stalk feeding can weaken stalks to the point of breaking, but damage is seldom enough to warrant insecticide application.
- Adult corn borer moths are yellow to light tan in color with dark zigzag marks across the wings. Adults are active during late evening and take shelter during the day in grass, weeds and crop residue.
- Monitoring ECB populations is essential for effective control. Monitoring can be done with pheromone traps or black light traps.

Action steps

1. **Choose the right hybrid:** Select a hybrid that performs well in your area and has traited protection against ECB. Remember that *Bt* varieties require non-*Bt* refuges. Refer to the product label for specific requirements.
2. **Use a good weed control program:** Adult ECB hide in grass and weeds during the day, so a good herbicide program can help keep them out of your fields.

<https://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/european-corn-borer-in-field-corn>



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30-Second Summary

- ECB infestation can cause weak and broken stalks.
- Look for clusters of eggs, larval damage or adult moths to determine if you have an ECB infestation.
- Resistant *Bt* hybrids and good weed control practices can help control ECB infestation.

NOTES:

For more information, contact:



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