



Proactive management of corn rootworm

Overview

Corn rootworm (CRW) beetle infestation can decimate corn yield. CRW populations tend to be high in regions with heavy corn-on-corn acres. Crop rotation, scouting and timely insecticide application can manage CRW pressure, improve yield and mitigate damage the following year.

What you should know

- You'll want to scout and control adult CRW beetles before they lay eggs. Prioritize fields with a history of rootworm pressure or local environments conducive to beetle success. Adult beetles are attracted to pollen and fresh silk, so scout fields in early reproductive stages first.
- Crop rotation is key: Planting continuous corn fails to break pest cycles and allows populations to increase rapidly.
- Understand whether you are in an area where western corn rootworm beetle variant or northern corn rootworm extended diapause populations are common.

Action steps

1. **Rotate crops:** Rotate to a non-host crop.
2. **Rate roots to assess field damage:** Compare samples from three spots in the field for a representative sample. Use the Iowa State University root rating scale to record results.
3. **Scout fields:** Begin scouting in June or July, as soon as beetles start emerging from the soil. Continue weekly until September.
4. **Calculate economic threshold:** Include western and northern CRW in a single count.
 - Corn-on-corn: 0.75 beetles/plant and 10% gravid females
 - Corn-on-soybean: 0.5 beetles/plant and 10% gravid females
5. **Continue monitoring after insecticide treatment:** Population fluctuations might warrant additional treatment.



For best results, scout and control for adult CRW beetles before they lay eggs.



30-Second Summary

- Adult corn rootworm (CRW) beetles can devastate yield.
- Scouting, crop rotation and use of insecticides can mitigate damage.
- Some CRW species have adapted to crop rotation, making other management practices even more important.
- Look to manage adult CRW beetles before they can lay eggs.

NOTES:

For more information, contact:



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