

# A Bug's Life

# Indian meal moth

Family: Pyralidae  
*Plodia interpunctella*

## Fun facts

- Most common pest of stored food products
- Found indoors, year-round
- Infests wide variety of stored food: flour, dried fruit, nuts, seeds, cereals, chocolate, bird seed, powdered milk, pet food, and spices
- Eggs laid close to food source, larvae chew into packaging, infest product
- Several generations per year



## Identification

Larva: Up to 1/2" long, cream-colored with pink or green tint, light brown head capsule, produce silk, mistaken for maggots

Pupa: Light brown, 1/4 to 2/5" long, covered in silk, hidden in crevices

Adult: 3/8" long, bicolored forewing with light patch closer to head and gray/copper color extending to wing tips



## Management

- Inspect food products (even unopened packages), locate and eliminate source
- Bag infested product, freeze (4 days) to kill, and discard in outdoor receptacle
- Check packaging dates for freshness
- Consume oldest product first
- Proper storage of goods in insect-proof containers (glass, plastic, airtight lids)
- Pheromone traps can be used to monitor (not control) moths



Photos: J. Green