

MOTHS MONITORED IN SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA

This year Nebraska Extension in Nemaha County will be in its fifth year in southeast Nebraska with a pheromone trapping network to monitor black cutworm, variegated cutworm and armyworm moths in southeast Nebraska. This is part of a larger network across Nebraska during the 2020 planting season. Traps have been placed into service April 3rd-6th in southeast Nebraska.

Gary Lesoing, Extension Educator in Nemaha County has recruited people in Nemaha, Richardson, Otoe and Lancaster County to monitor the pheromone traps. We have 2 sites for traps in Nemaha County; at the courthouse in Auburn and in Johnson. There is a specific trap and pheromone lure for each kind of moth.

These moths fly up from the south each year. Many times they blow in when storms come up from the south. Variegated cutworms generally are climbers and feed on leaves. Many times they are a problem in garden crops, even asparagus. When there are very high numbers, they can defoliate crops, such as soybeans and alfalfa. The variegated cutworm is not a pest every year, but with high infestations may require treatment with a pesticide. Sometimes alfalfa that has been harvested does not grow back due to feeding by variegated cutworms on the foliage. Under these circumstances it may require treatment. Infestations of the variegated cutworm are very sporadic.

Monitoring of the black cutworm moths has been conducted for several years in Missouri. There is a model that has been developed to determine when farmers can expect the first cutting by black cutworm larvae, depending upon growing degree days following the first intense capture of the black cutworm moth. Black cutworms can damage corn, sometimes even soybeans. In 2017 armyworms caused problems in some areas of Nebraska, so it was decided to monitor them as well since then. Nebraska Extension will be summarizing moth trap count numbers and will try to keep crop advisors and farmers abreast of potential pest problems later this spring. This data collected will provide information to help determine when and if there may be a problem with these types of cutworms or armyworms in Nebraska in 2020. There are other traps being monitored across Nebraska as well. We are also planning to monitor for the brown marmorated stink bug this summer. It is an invasive pest in a number of crops, especially in states to the east of us. It has been found in some locations in southeast Nebraska, but not at levels to cause concern. If you have questions about this program you can contact me at the Nemaha County Extension office at (402) 274-4755, (402) 274-9639 (cell) or glesoing2@unl.edu.



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