

Pest Alert: *Spodoptera frugiperda*



Fig. 1. *Spodoptera frugiperda* larva © John C. French Sr., Retired, Universities: Auburn, GA, Clemson and U of MO, Bugwood.org



Fig. 2. Adult in a natural resting position © Mark Dreiling, Bugwood.org

- **Fall armyworm**, *Spodoptera frugiperda*, is native to North and South America, and is found throughout both continents.
- It can only survive the **winter in tropical/subtropical areas**, but **migrates very long distances to temperate areas in the summer**.
- *Spodoptera frugiperda* was detected in Africa for the first time in 2016, where it is still causing **major impacts to a number of crops**. It has now spread across the continent, and can be found through much of sub-Saharan Africa, from the east coast, to the west coast and south (including South Africa). *Spodoptera frugiperda* has also spread across India and much of South East Asia into Australasia and Australia.
- The larvae prefer to feed on **grasses** and **cereals**, and cause high levels of damage on crops such as **maize**. However, they will also feed on a wide range of other plants and could be a potential pest of **glasshouse crops in the UK**.

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For **England and Wales**, contact your local **APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector** or the **PHSI Headquarters**, York.

Tel: 0300 1000 313 (please select option 3 when calling)

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

For **Scotland**, contact the **Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit**:

Agricultural crops contact the local RPID officer: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/AOcontacts/contacts>

For non-agricultural crops, email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

For **Northern Ireland**, contact the **DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch**:

Tel: 0300 200 7847 Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>

For additional information on UK Plant Health please see:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/uk-plant-health-risk-register/>

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth/PlantDiseases>

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk>