

Cutworms

Description: Cutworms are dull brown caterpillars with light colored stripes and smooth skin. When disturbed, they curl up into a C-shape. Their dome-shaped eggs are laid on stems and leaves near the ground. Adults are moths.

Damage: Cutworms attack most garden crops and many other plants. They clip seedling stems near or just below the soil's surface. They migrate to other plants once the food supply is exhausted. Cutworms also climb on foliage and chew holes in the leaves.

Management: Look for cutworms at night when they are most active. Destroy crop residues and surrounding weeds. Keep the garden free of weeds and sod in winter. Seedlings can be protected with cardboard collars, screens, or protective cloth placed around them. Using insecticide baits before there is serious damage provides control.

Cutworms are smooth-skinned, dull brown caterpillars (right).



Cutworm larvae chewed the stem of this corn plant. Cutworms curl into a C-shape when disturbed (left).