

# How Do You Do...?

## The Question: How Do You prevent Armyworms from destroying your field?

Answered by Chad Follis, Research Assoc., University of Missouri/Columbia

Education and scouting are the best methods to control armyworms in athletic turf. This is due to the sporadic occurrence of armyworms therefore preventative treatments are usually not recommended. There are two types of armyworms, the fall armyworm and the true armyworm. The fall armyworm is a more typical pest to turfgrass. The fall armyworm has a light colored inverted Y marking on the front of the head. This helps to distinguish the pest. Armyworms have one generation in the north to five generations in the south per year. Scouting methods include the soap drench test. This involves adding three

tablespoons of lemon scent dish soap to three gallons of water and pouring the water over a one square yard area. Then after a few minutes the worms will emerge to be counted and identified. If control measures are necessary liquid insecticide applications work best since they leave residues on the grass plant for the insect to feed on.

Some recommended insecticides currently on the market include: Sevin, Mach 2, Conserve SC, and Orthene.

Answered by Dr. Grady Miller, University of Florida

Army worms in our area (bermudagrass) rarely kill a field, they just defoliate it. Bermudagrass will grow new foliage very quickly after you get the armyworms under control. The worms are usually much worse following a drought period.

If you catch the worms before they do much damage then they are pretty easy to "knock back" with an assortment of insecticides (e.g., Diazinon, Orthene, Pinpoint, Talstar, Tempo, Conserve, Scimitar, etc). They usually start on an edge of a field and move across. I have actually counted 50 worms per square foot on a field. The ground would look like it was moving from all the worm activity. The field came back after they were sprayed. There is no preventative treatment that I know of for fields.



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