

Sunflower XIV-4

Sunflower Seed Maggot

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Maggot Eggs, left; Larva, center; Adult, right

Field Biology and Identification

The sunflower seed maggot adult is a small fly about six millimeters ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch) long, with a wingspan of about nine millimeters ($\frac{3}{8}$ inch). The wings have a brown lace-like appearance. Mature larvae are about 4.5 millimeters ($\frac{3}{16}$ inch) in length. Adults emerge during early July and egg deposition occurs on the corolla of incompletely opened sunflower inflorescences. The total larval period is 14 days. There are two generations. The first generation overwinters in the soil as pupae.

Plant Response and Damage

Larval damage is largely dependent upon the state of larval and seed development. Seed sterility occurs when newly hatched larvae tunnel into the corolla of young blooms. Young larvae can destroy up to three seeds during development.

Management Approaches

Significant yield losses have not been demonstrated with this insect. Insecticide treatments are not considered necessary under most conditions.

Categories: Sunflower, Insects, Sunflower seed maggot

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