Managing fall armyworm in vegetable crops —a project snapshot

Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Agriculture Victoria

The fall armyworm problem

Fall armyworm (FAW, *Spodoptera frugiperda*) was first detected in Australia in 2020 and has spread to every State and Territory except South Australia. FAW can travel long distances, has a broad host range and attacks crops from emergence to harvest. It prefers grass species like sweet corn, maize, and sorghum.

FAW can cause major crop damage and yield loss when left unmanaged. With limited control options available, growers rely heavily on insecticides which has increased input costs and raised the risk of insecticide resistance.

Our project

'*VG22006 National fall armyworm innovation system for the Australian vegetable industry*' is a 4-year extension project funded by Hort Innovation. Through this project, we're working with growers and agronomists across Australia to find better tools and practices for managing FAW at an area-wide scale.

With area-wide management, industry members work together to suppress and manage pest populations across a region. Area-wide strategies have been successful for managing similar pests like Helicoverpa.

Project activities

We've initiated area-wide management groups in the Bowen/ Burdekin (North Queensland), Lockyer Valley (South East Queensland) and East Gippsland (Victoria) regions. We're conducting demonstration trials to address key FAW needs raised by industry, including pupae busting, biopesticides, parasitoids and sweet corn varietal tolerance to FAW. We're also developing area-wide management strategies and maintaining a pheromone trapping network

Pupae busting & biopesticide trials, Bowen field walk 18 Sep 2024

For more information, visit our FAW eHub

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