



## Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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### Banana scab moth (017)



Photo 1. Scabby areas on the skin of banana fruits due to the feeding of the scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*.



Photo 2. Caterpillar of the banana scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*, between banana fingers. In this case, the caterpillar is dark brown.



Photo 3. Two caterpillars of the banana scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*, and large amounts of frass.



Photo 4. A grey-pink version of the banana scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*.



Photo 5. An adult banana scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*.



Photo 6. An adult banana scab moth, *Nacoleia octasema*.

### Summary

- Narrow distribution. Asia, Oceania. On banana, plantains, *Heliconia*, *Pandanus*.
- Caterpillars feed on skin of the fruit, going from one bunch to the next as the leaves lift. The damaged fruit becomes rough, dark and scab-like as it ages.
- Cultural control: inspect the crop daily and before the flower stalks are horizontal, (i) partly or completely remove the leaves over the flowers, and (ii) spray the fruit with water or dust with ashes.

- Chemical control: (i) Biopesticides: spinosad or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*); (ii) synthetic pesticides: inject with e.g., chlorpyrifos, bifenthrin, acephate into the upright bunch. Can also lift/remove leaves and dust or spray before the flower bends over.

## Common Name

Banana scab moth

## Scientific Name

*Nacoleia octasema* (previously, *Lamprosema octasema*)

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Photo 1 *Nacoleia octasema* caterpillar damaging banana "fingers" (Graham Teakle). Information (and Photos 2&4) Schmaedick M (2005) *Banana scab moth*. American Samoa Community College, Community & Natural Resources, Cooperative Research & Extension. Photos 3&6 Mani Mia SPC Sigatoka Research Station, Fiji. Photo 5 CSIRO website of Common Names. ([http://www.ces.csiro.au/aicn/name\\_c/a\\_228.htm](http://www.ces.csiro.au/aicn/name_c/a_228.htm)).

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