



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Black cutworm (297)



Photo 1. Mature larva of black cutworm, *Agrotis ipsilon*. Note the wide light coloured band down the back.



Photo 2. Mature caterpillar of black cutworm, *Agrotis ipsilon*, curling when disturbed. Note the scattered black spots over the body.



Photo 3. Adult moth of the black cutworm, *Agrotis ipsilon*. Note the small curved (kidney-shaped) patterns towards the tips of the wings and black dagger-like marks through them.



Photo 4. Adult moth of the black cutworm, *Agrotis ipsilon*. Note the black dagger-like marks are just noticeable on the left wing.

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On maize and many vegetables (beans, cabbage, lettuce, maize, tomato, weeds, and more).
- Young caterpillars eat leaves, older ones (up to 45 mm long) cut stems at or below soil, feeding at night. Curls if disturbed. Moth is a stronger flyer – migrates.
- Cultural control: avoid fields with previous attacks; weed; good drainage (raised beds); check plant base (gardens: handpick; fields: spray if >5% damage); nets or row covers; grow flowering plants to attract parasites; attract moths with vinegar, sugar, water.
- Chemical control: PDPs: derris, pyrethrum, or chilli; synthetic pyrethroids.

Common Name

Black cutworm, greasy cutworm

Scientific Name

Agrotis ipsilon

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Information from CABI (2013) *Agrotis ipsilon* (black cutworm). Crop Protection Compendium (www.cabi.org/cpc); and from Capinera JL (2012) Featured Creatures: Black cutworm. UF/IFAS, University of Florida. (http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/black_cutworm.htm). Photo 1 Roger Schmidt, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bugwood.org. Photo 2 Adam Sisson, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org. Photo 3 Ian Kimber, Bugwood.org. Photo 4 Pest and Diseases Image Library, Bugwood.org.

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The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

