

## Potato tuber moth (298)

### Summary

- Worldwide distribution. On potato, tomato and tobacco, the main hosts. An important pest.
- Eggs laid on leaves, and the leaves and stems mined. As soil cracks, larvae attack tubers near soil surface. Damage causes rots. Spread is in seed tubers.
- Natural enemies: wasp parasitoids and parasites.
- Cultural control: certified seed; remove volunteers; weeds; tolerant varieties; deep planting; test onion intercrops; hill-up; avoid overlapping crops; crop rotation; mulch before harvest; avoid cull piles.
- Chemical control: sprays of abamectin, spinosad, or synthetic pyrethroids. Neem in storage.

### Common Name

Potato tuber moth

### Scientific Name

*Phthorimaea operculella*. It is a member of the Gelechiidae.



Photo 1. Leaf mine of the potato tuber moth, *Phthorimaea operculella*.



Photo 2. Photo 1. Leaf mine of the potato tuber moth, *Phthorimaea operculella*, with larva inside.



Photo 4. Larva of the potato tuber moth, *Phthorimaea operculella*.



Photo 5. Potato tuber moth adult, *Phthorimaea operculella*.



Photo 3. Tunnels in potato tuber caused by the larvae of the potato tuber moth, *Phthorimaea operculella*.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

Information from CABI (2015) *Phthorimaea operculella* (potato tuber moth). Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/40686>); and from Harsimran K, et al. (2014) Featured Creatures: Potato tuberworm. UF/IFAS, University of Florida. ([http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/VEG/POTATO/potato\\_tuberworm.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/VEG/POTATO/potato_tuberworm.htm)). Photos 1-3 Western Australian Agriculture Authority (Department of Agriculture and Food, WA). Photos 4&5 MAF Plant Health & Environment Laboratory (2011) Potato Tuber Moth (*Phthorimaea operculella*). (PaDIL - (<http://www.padil.gov.au>)).

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