

Pacific Pests, Pathogens and Weeds - Online edition

Rice grain moth (337)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Rice, maize, sorghum, pearl millet, related grasses. Important pest, often with other storage insects.
- Damage starts at milky stage in field, continuing to final storage.
- Eggs laid into grains; larvae bore into grain, feed and, later, make "windows" for adult (moth) emergence. Adults are 6 mm long, grey, pale or yellowish-brown, with fringed wings.
- Spread as adults on the wing (strong flyers), or as larvae inside grain.
- Natural enemies: several predators and egg parasitoids (*Trichogramma*), but effectiveness uncertain.
- Cultural control: dry grain properly (12%); keep storage rooms and areas clean; spray bins, use new sacks; monitor lose grain in bins (top layers), and grain still on cobs (throughout); resistant varieties.
- Chemical control: consult full fact sheet; always check whether the product is for treating equipment, bins and buildings or for treating grain for human use and animal feed. READ THE INSTRUCTIONS.



Photo 1. The larvae of the grain moth, *Sitotroga cerealella*, bores into the kernel of grains and eats the endosperm and germ.



Photo 2. Adult grain moth, *Sitotroga cerealella*.

Common Name

Grain moth, Angoumois grain moth, rice grain moth

Scientific Name

Sitotroga cerealella. It is a member of the Gelechiidae.

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¹Information from Swaine G (1971) *Agricultural Zoology in Fiji*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London; and CABI (2012) *Sitotroga cerealella* (grain moth) Crop Protection Compendium (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/50238>); and Jacobs S, Calvin D (1990) Angoumois grain moth. Penn State Extension; and from Plant Pests of the Middle East. *Sitotroga cerealella* (Olivier) (http://www.agri.huji.ac.il/mepests/pest/Sitotroga_cerealella/); and Rickman J, Gummert M (undated) Pest management in storage. IRRI. (<http://www.knowledgebank.irri.org/search-results?gsquery=common+post+harvest+insects>); and from Jackman J (2018) Angoumois grain moth. Extension Entomology, Texas A&M Forest Service. (<https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/insects/angoumois-grain-moth/>). Photos 1&2 Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org.

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