



COMMAND PEST CONTROL

Information sheet number 49 Indian meal moth
(*Plodia interpunctella*)



Appearance:

14-20 mm wingspan, the outer halves of forewings are bronzy-reddish brown, the inner halves are light grey to yellow. At rest 8-10 mm long. The larvae are yellowish or white with a light brown head. The body has no markings apart from a pair of faint ring marks near the head and another pair near its rear. The pupa is yellowish-brown.

Breeding:

150 to 300 eggs laid, individually or in clusters in foodstuffs, the eggs need a temperature of 14°C to hatch and at that temperature hatch in 2-8 days. The larvae spin silk webbing amongst the foodstuffs, the larvae develop in 2-6 months in UK, or 16 weeks at 20°C, 5 weeks at 30°C. It moults 4-7 times and grows to 10-12mm, the larvae is yellowish or white with a light brown head. The pupae are usually in a loose cocoon; the larvae of the second generation hibernate in the cocoon. Egg to adult varies with temperature from 4 to 44 weeks.

Food:

Dried vegetables, herbs, dried fruit especially apricots, nuts especially almonds and walnuts, cocoa beans, confectionery, chocolate, grain and grain products where only the germ is eaten. The larvae will eat through paper, cardboard, foils and most packaging materials.

For more advice and control recommendations contact us on 01787 248049

Where do Indian meal moths live?

Warehouses, in raw materials especially from overseas, the principle pest in the dried fruit and nut processing industry. Commonly found in health food establishments. Often an indicator of badly rotated stock or old stock brought into a premises.

Damage:

The larvae will eat through paper, cardboard, foils and most packaging materials.

Control:

Identify harbourages, quarantine contaminated stock. Treat wall floor junctions and identify where webbing / pupal cases have been deposited. Remove pupal cases. Fog areas to knockdown fly insects.