

Variegated Cutworm

Variegated cutworm (*Peridroma saucia*) can be a fairly large caterpillar, generally gray or gray-brown, which is distinguished by the presence some light spots on the back. It is a type of "climbing cutworm" and a generalist feeder that feeds on the leaves, buds and fruit of a very wide range of plants.

Variegated cutworm occurs throughout the United States and in some areas is an important pest of many crops ranging from mint to apples. Historically, it has rarely been significantly damaging to crops in Colorado.

To date the observed presence of variegated cutworm in Colorado hemp has been rare. It appears to primarily feed on hemp leaves although this species is known to tunnel into developing flowers and fruit of other crops so it may do some damage to developing hemp buds. However, due to its rarity variegated cutworm its potential to significantly damage the crop seems minimal, at least in Colorado.

Lepidoptera: Noctuidae



Late stage caterpillars of the variegated cutworm in hemp.



Variegated cutworm feeding in a tomato.
Photograph courtesy of Jim Kalisch,
University of Nebraska.