

Beet Armyworm

The **beet armyworm** (*Spodoptera exigua*) is a caterpillar that feeds on leaves and developing flowers/fruits/seeds of a great many plants. As it does not have a way to survive outdoors in climates with cold winters, it periodically dies out in much of North America. Annually it will disperse northward during summer months and can be expected to occur on cannabis in highest populations late in the season. As with the corn earworm, larvae of beet armyworm that are carried on harvested plants will continue to feed and develop as plants dry.



Beet armyworm larva in seed head of hemp.

Damage to hemp by beet armyworm to hemp is likely to be minor, as outbreaks are dependent on southern migrants and the feeding injuries caterpillars produce are dispersed throughout the plant, much on leaves rather than flowers and seeds. Problems may occur when beet armyworm populations are high late in the growing season and they move into maturing buds and seeds.

Lepidoptera: Noctuidae



Beet armyworm larvae hatching from egg mass.
Photograph courtesy of Alton N. Sparks, Jr.,
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