

June 24, 2016

Subject: Old World Bollworm (*Helicoverpa armigera*) in Florida Deemed an Isolated Regulatory Incident

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

In late June and early July 2015, APHIS confirmed the detection of three adult male Old World bollworms (OWB) in the Bradenton area of Manatee County, Florida (DA-2015-43). These were the first detections of OWB in the continental United States.

Following these initial detections, APHIS and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) extensively surveyed throughout the state to determine the extent of this incursion. In addition, APHIS and FDACS conducted trace backs, trace forwards, and other outreach activities to determine any potential pathways.

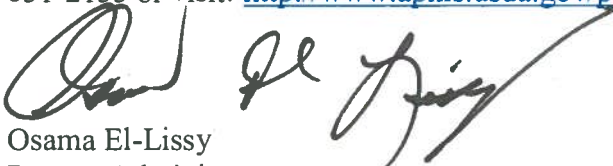
There were no additional detections of OWB in Florida after one complete year of continuous and intensive survey efforts. Therefore, APHIS and FDACS have determined that this OWB incursion was an isolated regulatory incident. Although APHIS and FDACS consider this a transient event, OWB remains a pest of concern for Florida and the United States and will continue to be a target in state and national survey efforts.

OWB is found in many countries in Africa, Europe, Asia, and the islands of the Western Pacific Region and has recently become established in Brazil, Peru, and Argentina. It is considered a severe economic pest in most places where it occurs. OWB feeds on many types of plants and can affect 180 species of wild and cultivated plants in more than 45 families. Major hosts include:

artichokes	okra
beans and forage legumes	peas
bell peppers	potatoes
cacao	rice, sorghum, and sugarcane
chrysanthemums	sunflowers
cotton	tobacco
maize, wheat, and other small grains	tomatoes

OWB is closely related to the corn earworm, *Helicoverpa zea*, which is widespread in the United States. The adult moths of these two pests can be distinguished using morphological characters; however, the larvae of corn earworm and OWB cannot be distinguished without DNA analysis.

For additional information on OWB, please contact National Policy Manager Eileen Smith at 301-851-2155 or visit: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/owb>



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