

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2014-45
October 9, 2014

Subject: Detection of Old World Bollworm (*Helicoverpa armigera*) in Puerto Rico
(Corrected)

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

On September 26, 2014, APHIS molecularly confirmed the first U.S. detection of Old World bollworm (OWB) in San Germán, Puerto Rico. This single adult male moth was detected in a pheromone trap in a bean field on September 12, 2014, as part of a PPQ survey effort.

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

In most places where OWB occurs, it is considered a severe economic pest and is also known to fly long distances. OWB is known to occur in many countries in Africa, Europe, Asia, and Oceania and has recently become established in Brazil and Argentina.

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

APHIS is developing options and next steps with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and Caribbean officials. We will work with trade representatives and state plant regulatory officials as we determine the next steps to address this pest.

For additional information on OWB, you may call APHIS National Emergency Response Coordinator Eileen Smith at 301-851-2155.

/s/ Michael A. Lidsky for
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