Cassava hornworm

Recognize the problem
The cassava hornworm is a pest of cassava. The adult hornworm is a moth and its offspring is a worm that eats and destroys the cassava leaf. The worms eat many holes on the younger leaves, and then attack the mature leaves. If left untreated the hornworm eats all the leaves in the field and even damages stems.

Background
The adult hornworm lays eggs on the leaves. The eggs hatch into worms in 3 to 5 days. The young worms start feeding under the leaves. Newly hatched worms are 6 millimetres (quarter of an inch) long and can grow to be ten centimetres (4 inches) long. The worms are usually red with black spots. The hornworm feeds for 12 to 15 days and then crawls to the soil where it stays for 20 to 26 days before coming out of the ground as a moth.

Management
- Monitor fields, looking for hornworms and their damage.
- If there are many hornworms, kill them with an insecticide such as organo-phosphate mixed with a pyrethroid or microbial insecticide. Follow directions on the label.

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Erinnyis ello*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Trinidad and Tobago