

Yellow stem borer on paddy

Recognize the problem

Yellow stem borer is the most damaging insect on paddy. It feeds inside the plant. Stems become dry and hollow and no grains are produced. The dried stems can be pulled out easily and are called dead hearts. The empty grains are known as white ears and detach easily.

Background

The insect has two different forms. The adult insect is usually a yellowish moth with a black dot on each wing and has a pointed mouth. The adults visit the fields in the evening. The young larvae or worms are found inside the stem and are off white with a red head and no visible legs.

The larva is thin with a rough surface and looks like a small tube. They cause much damage by boring into the stem and eating the plant. Only one larva is found in each stem although several stems can be affected.

Management

There are no resistant varieties of rice and chemical sprays are not effective once the larvae are hidden inside in the stem.

Early treatment of young plants helps to reduce damage in fields. In raised beds of seedlings spread *Cartap HCL 10G* evenly. This is an approved granular insecticide that dissolves in water and remains within the plant. A raised bed of one foot by 10 feet will need around 13 grams of *Cartap HCL 10G*.

After transplanting seedlings, and within 10 days, place pheromone dispensers containing sex pheromone tablets in the paddy field. These will attract adult moths and reduce populations of larvae. Place 32 dispensers per acre, evenly spaced. These should remain in the field till harvest. There is no need to replace the tablets during this time.

Young insect (larva). (Photo by Merle Shepard, CPC)



Adult moths normally appear more yellow. (Photo by Merle Shepard, CPC)



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.

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: India

Authors: C Chandramohan, Ramana Murthy, S R Ingle
 BCRL, PB 6426, Yelahanka PO, Bangalore 64
 tel: 080 28468839/43 email: bcl.fee@pcil.in

Edited by Plantwise.