

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska – Lincoln

Common Name: Tobacco Hornworm

Scientific Name: *Manduca sexta*

Order and Family: Lepidoptera, Sphingidae

Size and Appearance: The larva can grow to be 81mm in length and can be identified by a pink or red large curved horn on the end of its green body. The hornworm also has black and white lateral striping along its back.

The adult is a large moth that is gray in color and has 6 yellow spots on its abdomen. The hindwings have black zigzag lines that are very close together. It's wingspan can be anywhere from 90-120mm.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	1.5mm	Green to white in color; laid on upper side of leaves; hatch in 2-8 days.
Larva/Nymph	81mm	Green in color; curved red or pink horn on end of abdomen; 7 straight white stripes along back; 3 pairs of legs with 5 pairs of prolegs; 5 instars, sometimes 6.
Adult	90-120mm, wingspan	Gray in color; forewings have faint black and white markings; hindwings with black zigzag lines close together; abdomen has 6 yellow spots on each side.
Pupa (if applicable)	45-60mm	Reddish brown in color; oval and elongate shaped; end is pointed; has a maxillary loop (tube looking structure that has the mouthparts) that extends ¼ of body.

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Larvae: Chewing; Adult: Siphoning

Host plant/s: The larvae feed on leaves of plants, especially those belonging to tomatoes, potatoes, tobacco, and other solanaceous species.

The adults feed on nectar from flowers with deep throats such as petunias and honeysuckle.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): The larvae are born on the leaves of a plant and live off the plant until they become an adult. The damage is usually noticed when the top of a plant has been chewed up. They can quickly defoliate a plant if they go unnoticed.

The adults do not really cause any damage, they just take the nectar from long-necked flowers.

References:

Bartlett, T., (2004, April). Species *Manduca sexta* – Carolina Sphinx. Iowa State University. Retrieved February 1, 2016 from: <http://bugguide.net/node/view/3244>

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