

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Jim Kalisch, UNL Entomology Extension

Common Name: Indianmeal moth

Scientific Name: *Plodia interpunctella* Hübner

Order and Family: Lepidoptera, Pyralidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	0.3 – 0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• grayish white
Larva/Nymph	~12.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• off-white, but has been observed to be pink, brown or almost greenish• five pairs of well-developed prolegs
Adult	12.7 length 16 – 20 wingspan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• forewings reddish brown with a copper sheen on the outer two thirds and gray on the inner third• at rest wings are held roof-like• head and thorax appear gray and the posterior brown, with coppery sheen
Pupa (if applicable)	6 – 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• silken cocoon or unprotected• pale brown in color

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Larvae have chewing mouthparts, and adults have siphoning mouthparts.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Direct damage to grain is the result of larvae feeding on the seed germ. In grain to be sold for human or animal consumption, meal moth feeding reduces the dry weight. At the same time, grain weight may actually increase because of water absorption; with an increase in water content mold can become a problem. The biggest reduction in value is the result of

contamination by larvae that leave droppings and silken webs in the grain. The presence of live insects and insect parts can result in dockage of the grain when sold.

Reference:

Fasulo, T. R. and M. A. Knox. (1998) Indianmeal moth. Entomology and Nematology Department, University of Florida. EENY-26. Retrieved from http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/urban/stored/indianmeal_moth.htm

Jacobs, S. B. and D. Calvin. (1990) Indian Meal Moth In Stored Grain; *Plodia interpunctella* (Hubner). Entomological Notes. Department of Entomology, College of Agricultural Sciences. Cooperative Extension. The Pennsylvania State University. Retrieved from <https://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/pdf/indianmealmoth.pdf>