

Hello,

I am Troy Prosofsky, agronomy specialist with the Canola Council of Canada, and I'm looking for anyone willing to collect cutworms for research. Cutworms are an increasing threat to canola and other crops, and growers will benefit from knowing more about this native pest. This is your chance to assist in developing cutworm best management practices- and maybe win an iPad!

Through the Canola Agronomic Research Program (CARP), which is funded by the provincial canola grower organizations, a 3-year scientific cutworm research study has been approved and is starting this spring. Research results are intended to give crop consultants, agronomists and growers better decision making tools and management practices for cutworms.

At least seven cutworms species can cause economic damage to Western Canadian crops. These species are dingy, army, redbacked, glassy, darksided, pale western and bertha armyworm. We often generalize when it comes to cutworms and cutworm management recommendations, but some of these species behave in quite different ways and generalizations can result in crop losses or revenge spraying. Losses can approach 100% during outbreaks and be devastating for individual farmers. Bertha armyworm is probably the best known of the cutworm species, but dingy, pale western, redbacked and others can wipe out large patches of field in the spring — often before a grower notices. Even when growers do notice the missing plants, other issues are typically blamed such as weather, disease, herbicide carryover or machinery issues. We have a lot to learn about cutworms.

**Here's where you come in.** Our current challenge is sourcing and collecting cutworms. For every field sample captured, your name will be entered into a draw to be awarded this fall. First prize is a tablet (like an iPad or Android equivalent) of your choosing. **Here's is what to do:**

**In Alberta & Manitoba,** option 1 is to call or email one of the names below and they will come out and collect. Or, if you need to spray right away, option 2 is to collect samples yourself using the steps below.

**In Saskatchewan:** Option 2 only applies — growers will collect and submit samples themselves in all cases. SK specimens need to be delivered to the drop location or mailed priority post.

#### **Steps for collecting cutworms:**

- Larvae (the worm) should be handled as little as possible and always gently.
- Larvae require feeding material both for humidity and food. Feeding material could be a host plant, a piece of root crown, or a prepared media.
- **Do NOT include** soil with the cutworm specimen – it damages the cutworm (abrasion, cuts), speeds desiccation, and introduces disease.
- Place larva plus feeding material into a clean container. (I.e. sour cream container)
- Alternatively, small paper bags can be used for collection and shipping cutworms, PROVIDED the paper bag is protected from compression (e.g., place paper bag sample into box for shipping). Paper bags will work well for those who drop off samples directly with the researcher.

- **Every larva must have collection data, include the following:** (1) collection date, (2) collector's name, (3) collector's email or phone number (for the draw!), (4) nearest town, (5) GPS or legal land description, if known, (6) specimen description (species, if known), (7) name of host plant the worm was near or feeding on, and (8) previous crop.

Label example:

<b>Collection date:</b>	<b>10 May 2011</b>
<b>Collector name:</b>	<b>Jennifer OTANI</b>
<b>Email or contact information:</b>	<b>555-708-1234</b>
<b>Nearest town:</b>	<b>Beaverlodge AB</b>
<b>GPS or Legal Land Location:</b>	<b>N°55.19520° W119.39413°</b>
<b>Specimen description:</b>	<b>Unknown cutworm</b>
<b>Host plant:</b>	<b>Canola cv. 45H21</b>
<b>Previous crop:</b>	<b>Canola</b>

- **Remember to send lots of larva — and get them in fast so we can rear them!**
- More detailed collection protocols are available here:  
[http://www.westernforum.org/Documents/IPMN%20Protocols/2011\\_Cutworm%20Protocol\\_May31b.pdf](http://www.westernforum.org/Documents/IPMN%20Protocols/2011_Cutworm%20Protocol_May31b.pdf)

### Shipping cutworms:

- Once the samples are collected and put into containers, ship them priority post to the researcher nearest you. Here are the contacts:

**In Alberta:** Call the Alberta contacts first to see if they can come out and collect. If not, then follow the steps for collecting and shipping.

#### **Northern Alberta and B.C.**

Attn: Jennifer OTANI  
[Jennifer.Otani@AGR.GC.CA](mailto:Jennifer.Otani@AGR.GC.CA)  
 #1 Research Station Road  
 Beaverlodge Research Farm  
 Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada  
 Beaverlodge AB T0H 0C0  
 Tel. 780-354-5132

#### **Central Alberta**

Attn: Jim BROATCH or Patty REID  
[Patty.Reid@AGR.GC.CA](mailto:Patty.Reid@AGR.GC.CA)  
 Lacombe Research Centre  
 6000 C & E Trail  
 Lacombe, AB T4L 1W1  
 Tel. 403-396-2535

#### **Southern Alberta**

Attn: Jeremy HUMMEL  
[jyhmm1@gmail.com](mailto:jyhmm1@gmail.com)  
 4101 22 Ave S  
 Lethbridge, AB T1K 4Y3  
 Tel. 403-320-3202 x534

**Alberta's cutworm distribution maps are up and functioning:**

[http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app68/listings/cutworm/cutworm\\_map.jsp](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app68/listings/cutworm/cutworm_map.jsp)

**In Saskatchewan:**

**Drop samples off or send priority mail to:**

Attn: Scott Hartley  
Cutworm survey  
Crop Protection Lab  
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture  
346 MacDonald St.  
Regina, SK S4N 6P6  
Tel. 306-787-8130

**In Manitoba:** Call Barb first to see if they can come out and collect. If not, then follow the steps for collecting and shipping & drop samples off or send priority mail to:

Attn: Barb Sharonowski  
University of Manitoba  
Dept. of Entomology  
12 Dafoe Road  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2  
Tel. 204-474-7485

**Below are links for more information on cutworms or contact your provincial office:**

In Alberta: Ag-info Center: 310-FARM (3276)  
In Saskatchewan: Scott Hartley, (306) 787-4669  
In Manitoba: John Gavloski, (204) 745-5668

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/fad06s00.html>  
[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/inf4443](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/inf4443)

**On behalf of the researchers, growers & all others involved- thanks for your help!**

**Troy Prosofsky**

**If you have collection questions please contact me:**

**403.332.1412**

**[prosofskyt@canolacouncil.org](mailto:prosofskyt@canolacouncil.org)**

**@ProsofskyCCC**