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### **Fall Armyworm Scouting Results – 2023**

On August 11, 2021, an observant local agronomist found armyworm feeding injury in a brome stand in the Meadowlark Extension District. It would be the first of many calls and discussions lasting well into 2022, with damage done to some stands still discernible to this day.

That fall saw some of the heaviest feeding pressure noted in some time because of multiple factors that came together to make a bad thing a *very* bad thing. Drought that had been slowly spreading from the south and west across the state and reached Northeast Kansas after hay harvest. When armyworms arrived, there wasn't a lot to feed on. Stands locally were drought stressed and struggling to put on foliage. With that tender forage one of the few things to feed on for miles to the west, combined with a heavy moth flight, stands across the area saw multiple rounds of feeding – and no weather for recovery until winter dormancy set in.

Two years later, unless you saw injury symptoms persist, it might be easy to dismiss fall armyworm as a pest to even think about - but you do so at your own peril. Unless you had damage, you might not remember previous infestations in 2018, 2017, 2014, 2013, and 2010. They, too, caused damage, but in most cases not like we saw in 2021. They're here more often than we'd like to think.

While none of this seems very positive, one good thing did come out of the summer of 2021: the start of a monitoring network. Still in its infancy, the summer of 2023 marked the first year the fall armyworm flight was monitored across NEK. Four traps were spread across the south and west parts of the Meadowlark Extension District, each with a pheromone inside to attract male moths. Traps were checked weekly from mid-summer until dormancy.

Though numbers were light, fall armyworm adults *did* pass through our area again this summer. The early flight in was captured in mid-summer in central and southwest Kansas with flights back south for the winter later captured at three of our four trapping sites. The late capture didn't seem to result in any (noticeable) feeding injury, but the trapping network confirmed our suspicion that we would encounter fall armyworm somewhere in Kansas just about every year – and that means regular late summer scouting to avoid the stand issues that came from the 2021 moth flights and subsequent larval hatches.

Want to learn more about the moth trapping network? Check out our season summary video posted on our Facebook page at: <https://fb.watch/pFITIHwygx/>. It will explain our late season moth finds and what to expect from this program in the future. For more information on fall armyworm, feel free to drop me a line.