Greetings:

Well...This has been an unusual spring, has it not?

If you have not already done so, go ahead and put the traps out now. The trap captures are not reactive and we need to capture the moths on the way into Minnesota. Even if you still have snow cover, it has to be spring any day now does it not?

If you have not already done so, please send in your black cutworm pheromone trap locations to Travis Vollmer (tvollmer@umn.edu) who is collating these data.

We have cooperators running 64 Black cutworm pheromone traps scattered across southern Minnesota counties. Farmers, consultants, seed and ad retail agronomists are collecting and reporting the migration activities of black cutworm into Minnesota this spring. Counties containing one or more traps are shaded in the image below. The numbers represent the number of moths captured in results from individual traps that we received from last week (only Friday’s reported numbers are shown).

Each week we will provide a synopsis of the previous week’s activities. The daily capture for the traps will be placed on the map and more importantly areas (counties) with trap capture(s) indicate a potential damage from larvae will be highlighted.

Information on black cutworm biology, damage, thresholds, fields at risk and control will also be made available. You probably have questions on the 2013 black cutworm cooperative trapping network.

Why are you doing this? This is a good and important question. Black cutworms cause sporadic problems in Minnesota corn, sugar beets and other crops. Significant damage to corn and sugar beet fields was observed in 2011 and 2012. Black cutworm outbreaks can be predicted reasonably well based on
when and how many moths arrive. Knowing when moths are captured in an area and using degree-day models, we can predict when feeding damage by the larvae will begin and be completed. We will also know which parts of the state are most at risk. Both will improve scouting efficiency and minimize yield loss.

_How does the trap work?_ The trap you are monitoring is designed to attract and captured black cutworm adults. The small plastic cone contains black cutworm pheromone. This is a manufactured chemical mimic of a pheromone produced by the female to attract mates. As a result, these traps only attract males. This pheromone is very specific to black cutworm males. They move toward the pheromone expecting a female moth and end up stuck in the glue on the bottom. I would remove the moths each time you check the trap to avoid counting them more than once. Occasionally other moths are captured. A heavy accumulation of flies and dirt will be your clue to replace the bottom.

_Where do the black cutworm moths come from?:_ Black cutworm adults do not overwinter in MN. They migrate into Minnesota every spring with weather systems. Minnesota typically gets moths from Texas and Mexico. They move rapidly into Minnesota with a couple days, often raining out on the edge of thunderstorms. You will only catch moths in the pheromone trap for a brief period around moth arrival. Do not be discouraged if you have not caught any moths, that is a good thing.

_Can black cutworm moths survive being entombed in three inches of ice or 12 inches of snow?_ Not for long. Migrating moths have to endure cold temperatures on the way north. However, black cutworm eggs do not survive long periods below freezing.

One final note- we have spare lures and bottoms so let us know if a trap gets destroyed.

Good luck and be safe out there!

Bruce Potter, Ken Ostlie, Fritz Brietenbach and Travis Vollmer.