

Pea weevil

Bruchus pisorum (L.), the pea weevil, is not a true weevil, but is a serious pest of pea crops. Adults lay eggs in the developing pea in the field, but larvae complete development in the grain bin. For this reason the pea weevil is strictly speaking not a stored grain pest, though most of its damage is caused while it is in the bin. Larvae excavate the center of the pea and construct a circular exit hole (Figure 1). Damage from this insect is most often discovered at the elevator. Up to 70% of grain weight loss occurs in the storage bin due to continued larval feeding.

The adult pea weevil can be surveyed in the field using a sweep net. Adults are thick brown beetles with white spots on the elytra. The abdomen extends beyond the elytra and has white tips. The adults are measure 5mm in length.

Assessing

Sweep netting for adults in the summer after peas flower is a good way to survey populations. Beetles are more common near field borders.

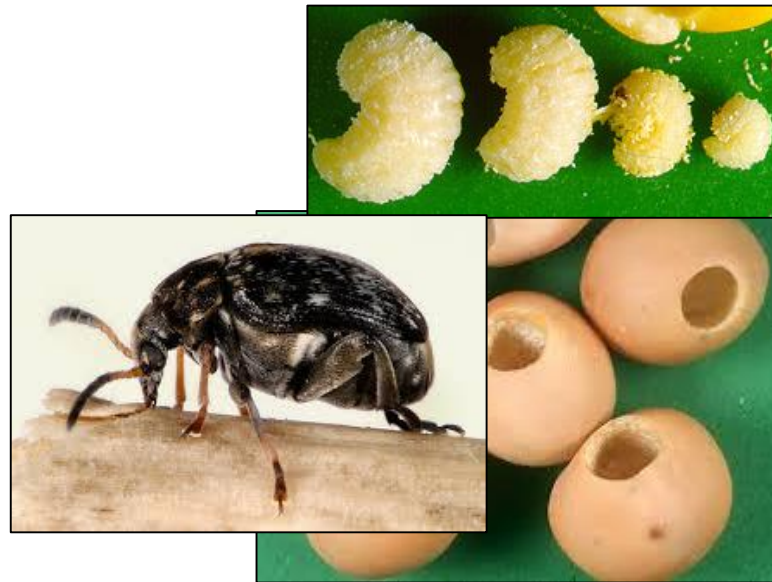


Figure 1. a) Pea weevil adult, larvae and damage to peas.

Control

Sheep may be used to graze out crop residues, either eating the larvae from shattered pods or exposing them to direct sunlight. Chemical control may be used for the adults when they are in flight. Threshold for spraying is 2 beetles/25 sweeps (Dun) & 1 beetle/25 sweeps (White).

Research

This is a new pest in Montana. WTARC is investigating monitoring methodologies to assess the presence and extent of pea weevil in Montana. As more information accumulates about this pest control programs will be initiated.