Fall Armyworms

Today on Gardening in a Minute: fall armyworms.

The fall armyworm is one and a half inches long when fully grown. They usually have dark heads and are tan to green in color.

Armyworms eat a wide variety of plants, but prefer corn, Bermudagrass, and grassy weeds like crabgrass. When the larvae are very numerous they defoliate plants and "march like an army" across a field en masse, consuming nearly all vegetation in their path.

Other crops sometimes injured are grape, citrus, papaya, peach, strawberry, and a number of flowers.

The best control method is to plant crops as early in the spring as possible to avoid large infestations. You can also select early maturing varieties. If you have an infestation, you can use recommended insecticides. Be sure to follow all label instructions.

For more information about armyworms and many other gardening topics, contact your county extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida’s Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.