

PEST ALERT

HELP US KEEP IT OUT!



Tomato Leaf Miner

(*Tuta absoluta*)

Tomato leaf miner moth (*tuta absoluta*) is an insect which mainly affects tomato but may affect other Solanum species which include potato, pepper and Devil's apple. This insect feeds on the leaves and fruits creating tunnels and dark, granular excrement.

Tuta absoluta is present in many countries within the region such as Haiti and Costa Rica. This pest can cause severe yield loss of up to 100% as well as an increase in tomato prices and a ban on the trade of tomatoes.

DESCRIPTION

Adult moths are small, with a body length of around 7 mm. They are brown or silver with black spots on the narrow wings. The antennae are long, and the legs and palps have black and brown rings. Eggs are oval-cylindrical, and are usually laid on the underside of leaves, buds, or on the calyxes of green fruit. They are cream-coloured and small (about 0.2 mm in diameter and less than 0.4 mm on the longest axis). Larvae are white or cream in early instars, with a black head. As they grow older, they turn pink or green with a brown head.