



Bean Seed Fly (Delia Platura)



Roger Vickers of PGRO has been in touch with the MGA this week to introduce us to the Bean Seed Fly and to inform us of developments that they, along with AHDB, NIAB, ADAS and Duchy College are funding part of. Their current aim is to find and provide information on the distribution of the bean seed fly across the UK in all affected crops. In addition, later this year, a PhD study will begin in order to improve understanding of the life cycle of this pest, as well as provide a forecasting tool for improved integrated pest management techniques (which will be supported by the data from this current project). This is particularly important due to the loss of approval for certain chemicals – there are no existing chemical solutions to manage the bean seed fly.

Background

As you may know, a significant host of the bean seed fly (other than peas and beans) is maize. Adult flies are attracted to freshly disturbed soil containing debris from previous crops, high levels of organic matter such as farmyard manure, or weed debris. Eggs are laid on the soil surface and larvae hatch after a few days and feed on newly planted seeds or plant and crop debris. After 10-14 days, larvae pupate and emerge as a second generation of flies, which move to suitable feeding sites. There may be several overlapping generations per year, occurring from late spring until early autumn. Seed of later planted peas or beans is attacked during germination and larvae feed on newly planted seeds and seedlings, tunnelling into freshly imbibed seeds and the stems of small seedlings. In severe infestations plant loss at seedling stage may be high, often resulting in re-drilling and loss of production of high value crops at an early growth stage.

How can you help?

There is a section within the PGRO app (free to download from Apple and Google Stores, search PGRO Pea and Bean Guide) which allows you to record the incidence of bean seed fly larvae in any crop. The link is shown on the opening page of the app so click on 'Bean Seed Fly' and select the crop type that you are growing. You will be able to create a report including farm name, field name, crop type, level of infestation/damage, photos and your postcode. The data will be used only for the purposes of the project and the report will be visible at <http://pgroapp.org/>. No personal data will be published.