Key Pests and Impact on Crop

- Soybean, especially in the South, can be subject to economic damage from a number of lepidopteran worm pests, such as:
  - corn earworm (CEW)
  - tobacco budworm (TBW)
  - soybean looper (SL)
  - velvetbean caterpillar (VBC)
  - beet armyworm (BAW)
  - fall armyworm (FAW)
  - green cloverworm (GCW)
  - cabbage looper (CL)
  - southern armyworm (SAW)

- For optimum control, apply an insecticide before larvae exceed economic thresholds and follow all label instructions. Your local or state extension office can provide economic thresholds, or you can refer to the article linked below:

The Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board has compiled economic thresholds for the key worm pests of soybeans from various university sources for several scouting methods:

http://mssoy.org/blog/using-insect-thresholds-for-soybean-management-decisions

Corn Earworm and Tobacco Budworm

- Similar looking species, singly laid eggs.

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Fall Armyworm (FAW)
• Apply an insecticide at first sign of significant larvae in or adjacent to field edges, or before the economic threshold is exceeded.

Distinguishing Armyworms and Earworms
True armyworm (AWM)
• Smooth cuticle; subdued colors.

Fall armyworm (FAW)
• Brown/gray larva with distinct tubercles along body.
• Three thin, white stripes down the back.
• Distinct white inverted “Y” on head (see image below).
• Young larvae may be difficult to distinguish from corn earworm (CEW).

Corn earworm (CEW)
• Bright, variable colors.
• Cuticle has “unshaven” look.

Credits
1Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org
2Whitney Cranshaw, Bugwood.org
3J. Michael Moore, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org
4Merle Shepard, Gerald R.Camer, and P.A.C Ooi, Insects and their Natural Enemies Associated with Vegetables and Soybean in Southeast Asia, Bugwood.org
5Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org
6Eddie McGriff, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

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A small change was made to these photos credited above: they were cropped to “zoom in” on the insect.

This article is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the product referenced herein. The product label contains important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product label at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations.