

# Northern Corn Rootworm

*Diabrotica barberi* Smith & Lawrence  
(Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae)

(Origin: Native)



Northern Corn Rootworm Adult

**Primary Host:** Corn.

**Damage:** Adults feed on pollen, corn silks, leaves and exposed corn kernels. Larvae tunnel into roots, often pruning them back to the crown, causing stunting and lower yields. Plants with badly damaged roots often topple over during storms.

**Management:** Monitor about mid-August for adult beetles on tips of corn ears. 200 or more per 100 plants may cause loss in the same field next year.

**Biocontrols:** No effective ones are commercially available.

**Cultural Controls:** Plant corn more than 5 days after rootworm egg hatch to prevent larval feeding.

**Physical Controls:** Crop rotation can effectively prevent infestation. Rootworms are seldom a problem in sandy soils.

**Chemical Controls:** Contact your local Penn State County Extension Agent for more information. <http://www.extension.psu.edu/extmap.html>

## Insect Description:

**Adults:** About ¼" long; solid yellowish-green in color. Good flyers.

**Western Corn Rootworm:** males are mostly black on the wing covers while females are striped with yellow under the abdomen. (Striped Cucumber Beetles have a black abdomen).

**Pupae:** In the soil; white, with no protective covering.

**Larvae:** White and slender; only found underground feeding on corn roots.

**Eggs:** Deposited in soil near the base of corn plants.

**Life History:** Overwinter as eggs in the soil. They hatch about mid-June. The tiny rootworms immediately begin searching for corn roots to feed on. Pupae develop about mid-July, with adults emerging in late July. Only 1 generation is produced per year.



Corn Rootworm Larva