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## LIGHT BROWN APPLE MOTH (*Epiphyas postvittana*)



The light brown apple moth (LBAM), a tortricid, is considered a major risk to agricultural commodities, with the potential of costing millions of dollars in lost production and added control costs. An Australian native, it has now become established in New Zealand and Hawaii. In 2007 it was discovered in California, where major eradication efforts are now underway. The main method of LBAM transport is likely on live plants. However, they could also be transported on fresh produce and green waste. It has not been detected in Connecticut.

The LBAM feeds on a wide range of plants; some estimates put the number of hosts around 1,000 species. Some of these include fruit and vegetable crops, such as grape, apple, blueberry, pear, strawberry, tomato, cabbage, corn, pepper, raspberry, and stone and pome fruits.

In Connecticut, we may have two or three generations per year depending on temperature. The insect overwinters in the larval stage in foliage in silken webs that they construct. Greenish larvae resume feeding in the spring. Larvae are the only stage that causes damage as they feed on leaves, fruit, and whole young seedlings. Mature larvae pupate in a thin brown cocoon between two leaves. Brown to tan patterned adults are nocturnal and have a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wingspan. In a 2-3 week period, a female could lay between 120 and 500 eggs. Circular white to light green eggs are laid in groups on leaves, young stems, and fruit. In severe cases, the larvae can damage upwards of 85% of a fruit crop.

There are native tortricids in Connecticut that could be confused with this exotic pest. Monitoring methods include a pheromone lure that attracts males. Regulatory and eradication programs in California also include aerial synthetic pheromone sprays, and pheromone-based traps. Other methods such as sterile male releases have been researched in New Zealand, but not yet implemented.

### Information Sources:

*Epiphyas postvittana* – Bugwood wiki - [http://wiki.bugwood.org/Light\\_brown\\_apple\\_moth](http://wiki.bugwood.org/Light_brown_apple_moth)



Department of Primary Industries and Water, Tasmania Archive, Bugwood.org



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