

CAROB MOTH (*Apomyelois* or *Spectrobates ceratoniae*)

Larva inside
flower bud



Cleaning stamens and flower
parts to remove egg-laying
sites



Adult Moth



Carob Moth
pheromone lures

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Description

The Carob Moth is an agricultural pest attacking various fruit and nut plants including pomegranates, pistachio, figs, dates, almonds and citrus fruits. It is a major problem in pomegranates.

During spring, the female moths find suitable fruit and lay eggs on the stamen of the flower of pomegranate. After hatching they feed until fully grown and then pupate. Generally, pupation occurs inside the crown of fruits. There may be up to three further generations a year, before the cool weather induces diapause in the remaining larvae. The problem is worst in mixed orchards of pomegranate with almond or pistachio.

Monitoring

Monitoring is by pheromone trap. Place traps in orchards in early March and record catches weekly. The threshold for economic damage is not determined.

Control

Practical experience shows that cleaning and removing the mass of old stamens after flowering can deter egg-laying. Some growers block the calyx end of the fruit with mud, but this can introduce diseases. **ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD INSECTICIDE BE MIXED WITH THE MUD.**

In a small orchard, removal of infested fruits and nuts and mummified fruit in winter will help control.

Chemical: Spinosad is the best choice for IPM. Fenoxycarb or similar Insect Growth Regulator pesticides are likely to be effective. Synthetic pyrethroids (Cypermethrin, Lambda-Cyhalothrin, Bifenthrin) or Chlorpyrifos are probably effective, but are not recommended for IPM.

Suggested Timing: spray 5-7 days after first catch of moths in spring. Avoid spraying when bees are foraging.