



ARMYWORMS ... Defending Your Lawn

Armyworms invade landscapes in large groups and can cause a lawn to turn brown seemingly overnight. Young armyworms are up to ½ inch long. Mature armyworms are longer. Body color may vary from green to almost black with light stripes along the length of the body. Look for a whitish inverted “Y” on top of the black head. Progression from egg to pupa normally takes 2-3 weeks. The adult is a moth.

Armyworm damage can resemble drought damage, but inspection of the turf will reveal the larvae. Look for active feeding during early morning or early evening hours. The larvae feed on the foliage and the resulting dehydration causes the turf to quickly turn brown.

To protect your lawn against armyworm attacks, follow this defensive strategy:

1. Water your lawn thoroughly if it is dry.
2. Treat your lawn for armyworms with a recommended product such as **ferti•lome Spinosad** or **Hi-Yield Bug Blaster II with Bifenthrin** in liquid forms, or granular products such as **Hi-Yield Bug Blaster Plus Above/Below** or **Hi-Yield Turf Ranger II**. Be sure to follow label directions. The best time to treat is early morning or late afternoon, when the caterpillars are likely to begin feeding. If the product you use is a granular, water it in lightly. If the product you use is a liquid spray, do not water it in. Do not mow or water your lawn for about 2-3 days after treatment.
3. After 2-3 days, you may resume regular watering and mowing. Continue to be on the lookout for another generation of armyworms. Second generations usually occur in August to September.

If your fescue lawn has suffered from armyworm damage, your offensive strategy begins in early September with these recovery steps:

1. As temperatures cool around the first of September, apply **ferti•lome Winterizer** to encourage new growth and stem strength.
2. In mid September assess the damage and overseed as necessary.
3. Apply a second and third application of **ferti•lome Winterizer** in October and November.
A healthy, stable lawn will be better able to endure winter weather.