

Common pests causing direct injury to corn

Pest*	Scouting window	Comments
aphids (nymphs and adults)	silking–dent (R1–R5)	feed on the husk; excrete honeydew that can promote a black sooty mold and interfere with harvest equipment
colaspis beetles (adults)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	secondary pests that feed on kernels near the tip
corn earworm (caterpillars)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	feed on kernels, especially near the tip; can open the husk to allow secondary pests and pathogens into the ear
corn rootworms (adults)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	clip silks and interfere with pollination; feed on kernels near the tip
European corn borer (second generation caterpillars)	dough–dent (R4–R5)	feed on kernels, cob, and shank
flea beetles (adults)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	secondary pests that feed on kernels near the tip
fall armyworm (caterpillars)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	feed on kernels, especially near the tip; can open the husk to allow secondary pests and pathogens into the ear
grasshoppers (nymphs and adults)	silking–dent (R1–R5)	feed on kernels, especially near the tip; can open the husk to allow secondary pests and pathogens into the ear
Japanese beetle (adults)	silking (R1)	clip silks and reduce pollination rates.
sap beetles (larvae and adults)	milk–dough (R3–R4)	secondary pests that feed on exposed kernels
stink bugs (nymphs and adults)	silking–dent (R1–R5)	feed on developing kernels through the husk
twospotted spider mite (nymphs and adults)	silking–dent (R1–R5)	feed on the husk
western bean cutworm (caterpillars)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	feed on kernels; can open the husk to allow secondary pests and pathogens into the ear
yellowstriped armyworm (caterpillars)	silking–dough (R1–R4)	feed on kernels, especially near the tip; can open the husk to allow secondary pests and pathogens into the ear

**This is not an exhaustive list of pests causing direct injury to corn in Iowa. This table focuses on pests that are feeding on the reproductive stages (not planted or stored seed).*

Common pests causing direct injury to soybean

Pest*	Scouting window	Comments
aphids (nymphs and adults)	flowering–seed set (R1–R6)	feed on surface of pods; excrete honeydew that can promote black sooty mold
bean leaf beetle (adults)	pod set–seed set (R3–R6)	feed on surface of pods; can transmit bean pod mottle virus that reduces seed coat quality
corn earworm (caterpillars)	pod set–seed set (R3–R6)	feed on flowers and on seeds through pods; greatest risk when large instars coincide with full seed set
grasshoppers (nymphs and adults)	pod set–seed set (R3–R6)	feed on pods and seeds; heaviest along field edges
stink bugs (nymphs and adults)	pod set–seed set (R3–R6)	feed on developing seeds through the pod; results in deformed or shriveled seeds; heaviest along field edges
twospotted spider mite (nymphs and adults)	flowering–seed set (R1–R6)	feed on surface of pods

*This is not an exhaustive list of pests causing direct injury to soybean in Iowa. This table focuses on pests that are feeding on the reproductive stages (not planted or stored seed).

Common pests causing direct injury to alfalfa

Pest*	Scouting window	Comments
alfalfa caterpillar	all season	feed near flowers
alfalfa weevil (larvae and adults)	first and second cutting	begin scouting south-facing slopes first; feed near flowers; pyrethroid resistance is suspected in some areas
aphids (nymphs and adults)	all season	feed near the flower; excrete honeydew that can promote black sooty mold; may vector plant viruses
clover leaf weevil (larvae and adults)	first and second cutting	feed near flowers
fall, true, and yellowstriped armyworm (caterpillars)	all season	feed near flowers
grasshoppers (nymphs and adults)	first and second cutting	along field margins, fence rows, pastures, etc.; vulnerable after first harvest
plant bugs (nymphs and adults)	after first cutting	feed on flowers and buds
potato leafhopper (nymphs and adults)	after first cutting	feed near flowers; excrete honeydew that can promote black sooty mold; cause “hopperburn,” which could be mistaken for nutrient deficiencies; resistant varieties are effective after establishment
twospotted spider mite (nymphs and adults)	all season	feed near flowers

*This is not an exhaustive list of pests causing direct injury to alfalfa in Iowa. This table focuses on pests that are feeding on the reproductive stages (not planted or stored seed). Alfalfa is especially vulnerable to direct injury if newly established, under drought/winter injury stress, or already impacted by other pests/pathogens.