

Groundnut leafminer

Recognize the problem

The adult leaf miner is a small brownish grey moth (butterfly) that lays its eggs on the underside of groundnut leaves and petioles. The eggs hatch into small yellowish-green caterpillars (tumbu) with shiny black heads.

Background

The young tumbu enters the young leaf immediately after it hatches from the egg and starts feeding. As the caterpillar feeds, small blisters (mines) are seen on the upper surface near the mid rib. As the feeding progresses, the mines increase in size and the entire leaflet becomes brown, rolls, shrivels and dries up, resulting in early shedding of leaves which affects the growth and yield. In severe cases the entire plant appears to have been burnt up.

Management

- Plant early at the start of the rains between the second week of April and the second week in May.
- Plant varieties like samnut 22 and 23.
- Rotate groundnut with maize to reduce leaf miner population.
- Weed four weeks after planting for first weeding and at least two times later when weeds are seen.
- Remove and crush webbed leaves in which the green larvae hide.
- Light traps could be used to catch the adult moths.

Adult leaf miner. (Photo by E. Neering)



Caterpillars coming out of leaf mines. (Photo by E. Neering)



Scientific name(s) > *Proaerema modicella*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Sierra Leone



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