



ADVISORY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FRUIT PIERCING MOTHS-2022

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I. Fruit piercing moths (*Eudocima materna*, *E. fullonia* and *E. homaena*)

Three different species of fruit-sucking moths remain active from August to October and attack only the fruits of the *Mrig bahar* crop of pomegranate. Adult males and female moths pierce the fruits at night; with time, these damaged fruits become soft owing to secondary infections from different fungi and bacteria. Punctured holes on fruits with oozing fruit juice can be noticed from pierced fruits. Later these fruits drop under the plants. The number of pierced holes may vary from 1 to 30/fruit.

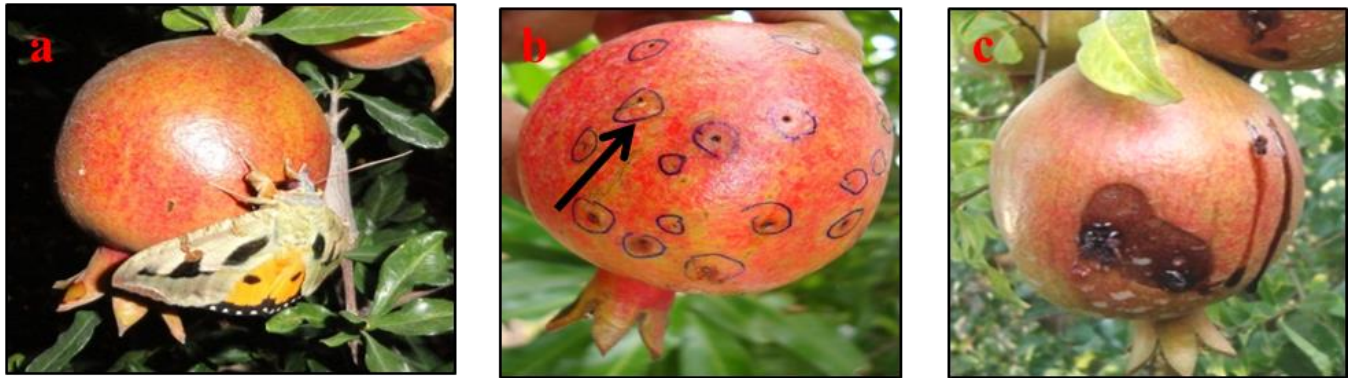


Fig. a) Adult Moth piercing the fruit b) Fresh feeding holes c) Oozing of fruit juice from pierced fruits

II. Management:

- As the activity of fruit sucking moth remains from August to October avoid taking *Mrig Bahar* crop in pest endemic areas.
- Destroy larval hosts plants like *Tinospora sp.*, *Cocculus sp.*, and *Lantana camara* from the vicinity of the orchards which helps to check the pest population.
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- Bag/cover the fruits with polypropylene non-woven white bags or butter paper bags in the last week of July.
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- If delay in bagging, then take the spray with neem oil 10000ppm @ 2ml/l + Citronella oil @ 1.0ml/l water prevents moth entry for 3-4 days. If rain occurs within 24 hours of spray, then repeat the spray.
- Dispose of all fallen and decaying fruits which attract the moths.
- Do not remove the pierced fruits on the plant as moths again visit the damaged fruits. Thus, other fresh fruits get protected. However, take some fungicide spray to avoid the growth of fruit rot pathogens.
- Under small-scale situations, the moths can be collected using a torch and hand net daily after sunset and destroyed the moth by killing them.
- If the power supply is available during night hours, then install the 150-200 watts fluorescent light on each corner of the orchard and each light focus on the other which will help to deter the moths.

- One-time fruit harvest: When 25% of fruits are ripened, harvesting of all fruits may be taken.
- Maturing papaya and guava plants around the pomegranate orchard will serve as an alternate host to avoid damage to the main crop.
- Ripened banana/papaya fruits injected with insecticide hung in bucket traps around the pomegranate orchard will attract moths and fed moths will get killed.

Note:

- Bagging need to be taken for the maturing and ripening stage fruits and before taking the bagging if bacterial blight or mealybug infestation is found then proper sprays need to be taken before bagging.
- Farmers should also check the rain forecast while spraying oils as it should not rain for at least 10-12 hours (best 24hrs) after spraying if it rains repeat the spray once the rain stops.
- Use spreader sticker in sprays as it helps in better spreading and sticking the spray solution for good results and reducing toxic effects.