Rice leaf folders (Cnaphalocrocis medinalis, Guenee)

Biology

- The pest is a small brownish – orange coloured moth with 1-2 distinct dark wavy lines on the brownish fore and hind wings.
- Both wings have a dark brown to grey band on their outer margin.
- The eggs are laid singly or in pairs on the under surface of tender leaf blades.
- The incubation period is 4 - 7 days.
- The pale yellowish green larva becomes full grown in 15 - 27 days and pupates inside the leaf roll. Pupal period is 6 - 8 days.
- Total life-cycle varies from 25 - 42 days.

Geographical Distribution

- Rice leaf folders have been reported in all rice growing areas.

Damage on rice crop

- The larva rolls the leaf blade by fastening its edges and the leaf tip to the basal part of the leaf blade and feeds from inside by scraping.
- In a severely infested field the whole crop gives a sickly appearance with white patches.
- The infestation at boot leaf stage of the crop sometimes results in heavy loss of grain yield.

Management Strategies

1. Cultural control
- Early planting may help to avoid greater degrees of leaf damage.
- Wider spacing (22.5 x 20 cm and 30 x 20 cm) and use of fertilizers as recommended (refer to sheet on rice establishment) minimizes leaf damage.
- Encourage predators through conservation of patches of natural vegetation.
- Avoid shaded areas

2. Biological control
- Use of neem based insecticides (Achook, Nematon, Nimbecidine)
- Enhance the activities of predators and parasitoids of leaf folders.

3. Chemical control
- Use insecticides when we have 10% infestation.