SOME POST HARVEST INSECT PESTS THAT THREATEN FOOD SECURITY

Prof. Florence Olubayo
Introduction

• Factors such as storage duration, prevailing environmental conditions and crop varieties influence insect populations development and losses incurred.
• Inadequate storage methods lead to losses in stored grain sometimes of unacceptable magnitude in SSA.
• These pests inflict both direct and direct damage to the grain, and the most important ones start in the field.
Damage caused

Direct damage

• Kernel damage,
• Contamination,
• Grain dust,
• Damage to wooden structures and other containers

Indirect damage

• Dry grain heating and moisture migration in storage
• Lowered germination of seed grains
• Distribution of molds and other organisms through the grain mass
• Insect fragments in cereal products
THE GRAIN MOTH

*(Sitotroga cereallella* (ol.))

- Small straw coloured moth (wing span 10-18mm)
- Able to fly from infested grain in store to the field
- Infests maturing cereals in the field
- Infestation can also occur at store levels.
- Damage: small circular ‘windows’ and holes on the grain
- Causes severe damage to cereals stored mainly in unthreshed form
- Grain attacked: maize, sorghum, wheat, paddy & barley.
SITOTROGA CEREALELLA
(Angoumois Grain Moth)
MAIZE AND RICE WEEVILS

*(Sitophilus spp.)*

- Dark brown weevils (2.5-4.5mm long)
- Able to fly from infested grain in store to the field.
- Infests maturing cereals in the field
- Infestation can also occur at store level
- Damage: Small circular holes on the surface of the grain
- Causes severe damage to grain stored in both threshed and unthreshed form
- Grain attacked:- maize, millet, sorghum, wheat, barley and rice
SITOPHILUS spp.
(Maize and Rice Weevils)
LARGER GRAIN BORER

*(Prostephanus truncantus*(h.))

- A dark brown cyclindrical beetle (3-4.5mm long)
- Able to fly from infested grain in store to the field
- Infests maize in the field before harvest
- Infestation can also occur at store level
- The beetle eats funnels and holes in the husks, grain and cob.
- Very serious pest that also eats into the wooden store structures
- Also feeds on dried cassava
PROSTEPHANUS TRUNCATUS
(Larger Grain Borer)
PULSE BRUCHIDS (BEETLES)

• THE BEAN BRUCHID (*Acanthoscelides obtectus* (say)).
• Grey to brown oval beetles (3 – 4.5mm long)
• Able to fly from infested grain the the store to the field
• Infestation can also occur at store level
• Damage:- small dark ‘windows’ and holes on the grain
• Causes serious damage to stored beans
ACANTHOSCELIDES OBTINCTUS
(Bean Beetle)
THE COWPEA BRUCHIDS  
(*Callosobruchus* spp)

- Light to dark brown beetles (2.0-3.5mm long)
- Able to fly from infested grain in stores to the field
- Infests maturing legumes (cowpea, pigeon peas, chick peas and grains) in the field
- Infestation can also occur at store level
- Small dark ‘windows’ and holes on the grain indicate infestation by the bruchids
- Causes serious damage to stored pulses.
Callosobruchus spp.
THE FLOUR BEETLE

(*Tribolium* spp)

- Reddish brown flat beetles (2.5 – 4.5mm long)
- Infests stored (broken) grain and milled products
- Causes high level of gram contamination
- Presence of reddish brown beetles, cast skins and faecal pellets on damaged grain and milled products indicates infestation by these beetles.
- Serious secondary pests of all stored grain and milled grain products
TRIBOLIUM CASTANEUM
(Rust-Red Flour Beetle)
EPHESTIA spp.
(Tropical Warehouse Moths)

Several species of *Ephestia* may be encountered in tropical stores. They attack a wide range of products particularly damaged or processed cereals, dried fruit, nuts, cocoa and even tobacco. Only the larvae feed. They also leave trails of silk which can form a thick webbing over and in the stored food. Reconditioning food to remove webbing can be very costly.

(Wing span 11-28 mm)
Some Management Practices

Post-harvest Insect pest control should begin before the crop is mature and must definitely begin before it is harvested and put in drying structures.

Proper program for insect control include:

• Select plant varieties with good husk cover and inherent resistance to field and storage pests
• Repair the store and thoroughly clean before the new crop is mature.
• Clear the surrounding s of the store of any waste that can harbor insect pests
• Harvest early to avoid field infestationation
• Dry the grain as fast as possible and shell it when dry
• Shell carefully to avoid damage to the kernels
• Treat the dry grain with an appropriate insecticide
• Carry out regular inspections of the stored grain to detect any infestation and take control measures as necessary

• Carry out principles of good store management, including maintenance, stock rotation and hygiene.