

NOTES ON LAPHYGMA FRUGIPERDA

AND

OTHER PESTS OF CORN

IN TRINIDAD.

-----

I. INTRODUCTION.

Laphygma frugiperda, S. and A. has a wide distribution throughout the Tropics, and Sub-Tropics of America.

In the West Indies it is recorded from Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Grenada, Barbados, Trinidad and from Honduras and British Guiana.

The larva of the moth is commonly known in the West Indies as the corn ear worm a name also, and more aptly applied to Chloridea obsoleta. In the Southern United States it is well known as the fall army worm.

The larva of Laphygma frugiperda feeds on a variety of host plants, but in the West Indies it is chiefly important as a pest of Indian corn.

Throughout Trinidad corn is grown in small patches as a garden crop, the produce being consumed by the cultivator. It is, therefore, difficult to estimate the acreage devoted to the production of the crop since none of it enters into commerce, and indeed considerable quantities of corn are imported from Venezuela and the United States.

Normally the crop is planted with the beginning of the rains in May or June and is ripe for harvest in September. When the plants are some six to eight inches in height the young caterpillars make their appearance, feeding within the throats of the plants. It is rarely that a patch of corn escapes attack to a greater or less degree.