

Orange tortrix

What is it?

The orange tortrix, *Argyrotaenia citrana*, is a moth which is a pest of grapes in coastal areas and valleys in the USA. It is also attacks a wide variety of other fruits including apples, raspberries, blackberries, apricots, avocados and citrus.

Overwintering larvae feed on any soft, exposed vine tissue, weeds, and in grape mummies on the vine. Spring feeding is on buds, canes, and webbed leaves. Larvae then enter fruit bunches and make a nest of webbing among the berries. Besides injury to leaves and berry stems, their feeding allows entry of other disease organisms.

What do I look for?

Adult moths are approximately 10 mm long with a wingspan of 16 mm. They are brownish or buff coloured with a saddle- or V-shaped darker brown area across the folded wings.

Males are smaller than females with narrow abdomens and have a pair of crescent-shaped dark markings on the wing margins.

The eggs of the orange tortrix are pale cream or green coloured when first laid, but darken as they mature.

Larvae are pale cream to green in colour. When disturbed, the larvae wiggle backwards and either drop to the ground or hang on a silken thread.



Orange tortrix adult moths and egg mass on a leaf



Orange tortrix larvae feeding on a developing bud

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Larvae of the Orange tortrix feeding on a grape bunch



Larvae of the Orange tortrix



Silken larval nest in a ripening grape bunch

How does it spread?

Young larvae can be transported short distances on silken strands by the wind. Adult moths are good fliers.

Where is it found?

USA (California, Oregon and Washington).

Control options

In the USA, Orange tortrix populations are often controlled by parasites, especially in warm years when high temperatures slow its development. In cool years, higher populations occur, and natural enemies may not be able to hold populations below economically damaging levels; more control measures may be needed.

Cultural practices to control the orange tortrix include cleaning up the vineyard during the dormant period. Removing dried grape clusters on vines and weeds, and clusters on the ground at least a month before shoots begin to develop in spring.

How can I protect my vineyard from Orange tortrix?

Check your vineyard frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common viticulture pests so you can tell if you see something different.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**

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Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Viticulture Industry, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6215 7700.