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# Pest Alert: *Tecia* *solanivora* – Guatemalan potato moth

- *Tecia solanivora* is a South American pest of potatoes, which has been in the Canary Islands since 1999, and in September 2015 was reported from mainland Spain (Galicia), where it is under eradication.
- The main risk of entry into the UK is via potatoes and their containers imported from mainland Spain.
- The pest is cryptic, larvae burrow into potato tubers and create galleries. External damage is not seen until the larvae creates an exit hole (2-3 mm) – Photos below show external and internal tuber damage and larvae of *T. solanivora* (Images courtesy of © International Potato Center). To date damage has only been found in countries with a warmer climate than the UK.
- Both crops and potatoes in storage may be attacked. Inspection by cutting open tubers and inspection of containers for pupae and adults is recommended.

**Fig. 1.** Larval emergence holes



**Fig. 2.** Larval feeding holes



**Fig. 3.** Guatemalan potato moth larvae



If you see any suspicious symptoms on tubers, please inform the relevant authority.

For England and Wales, contact your local  
APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the  
PHSI headquarters, in York: Tel: 01904 405138

Email: [planthealth.info@apha.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:planthealth.info@apha.gsi.gov.uk)

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

For Scotland, contact your local RPID  
officer:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/AOcontacts/contacts>

Web: [www.gov.scot/PotatoHealthControls](http://www.gov.scot/PotatoHealthControls)

For Northern Ireland, contact the  
DARD Plant Health Inspection  
Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: [planthealth@dardni.gov.uk](mailto:planthealth@dardni.gov.uk)

Web: [www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)