Managing the potato tuber moth

The potato tuber moth appears as a small greyish moth. The moths lay their eggs at the base of the stalks and on the leaves of the potato plants. Some moths eat the leaves while others eat the inside of the stems. The potato tuber moth hides during day time and flies after sunset and moves over long distances through infested seeds.

Pest management

Since the moth moves mainly through infested seeds, it is important to use healthy seeds free from the worms.
Inspect your seed before planting to ensure that it has no worms.
Moths are attracted by the smell of potatoes hence plant the seeds at least 20cm deep in the soil to prevent moths from laying their eggs on the potatoes.
Preserve beneficial insects like wasps and ants which feed on the moths and their eggs by not using pesticides which kill everything, and keeping around trees and flowering plants.
Put pheromone traps in areas where the moths are a big problem. Put about 5 pheromone traps per hectare.
Always hill up your potato mounds high to prevent the moths from laying eggs in the potatoes.
During harvest, always remove the potatoes from the field the very day they are harvested and if you can’t and they have to stay in the field overnight then you have to cover them with a tarpaulin to prevent the moths from laying eggs in the potatoes.
Before storing your potatoes, select the potatoes carefully so that you do not keep wormy potatoes in your store.

Storage room preparation

Sweep the floor and clean the walls of the store before storing potatoes. Spray the walls of your storage room using lime mixed with water to kill any moth, larvae, or pupa that could be hiding.

Put plants with a strong smell like eucalyptus below and on top of your stored potatoes to repel away the moths.
Hang pheromone traps in the storage area to trap and kill any moths that can come in.
Inspect the stored potatoes every once in a while inspecting for and removing the infected potatoes.