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.

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
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

For Northern Ireland, contact the DARD Plant Health Inspection Branch:
Tel: 0300 200 7847
Email: planthealth@dardni.gov.uk
Web: www.dardni.gov.uk

Fig. 1. Larval emergence holes
Fig. 2. Larval feeding holes
Fig. 3. Guatemalan potato moth larvae