

Extension Crop Update

Prepared by Joel DeJong, ISU Extension Crops Specialist

April 1, 2008

Volume 11, Issue #2

This newsletter, and previous issues from last year, can be found on-line at:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/plymouth/info/cropupdate.htm>

Try Out the New Integrated Crop Management News site! ISU Extension recently made a major change to the old Integrated Crop Management Newsletter – a newsletter that I have linked for articles many times in the past. Historically, it was mailed out to subscribers, and could be found on the web. The newsletter has now changed titles, and subscribers can have e-mails sent daily or weekly when updates occur. We hope this online source for crop production news and information provides greater access to Iowa State University Extension resources and enhances the timeliness of information you need to make decisions in your fields. New features of the site include:

- Weekly or daily e-mail notification of new articles
- Quick access to crop production sites at Iowa State University
- Easy-to-print single articles and weekly compilations
- Rapid response when a crisis occurs

We encourage you to bookmark this site, www.extension.iastate.edu/cropnews. This ISU Extension site will grow and change over the next few months, so please visit often. If you want to subscribe to this online newsletter, go to here and sign up: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/Subscribe.htm>.

Start Clean in No-till – I'm a firm believer that if you are a no-tiller, you need to start with weed free fields. Over the years I have observed infestations of winter annual weeds that have gotten ahead of no-till planting, and sometimes the glyphosate treatment applied later doesn't do a very good job of cleaning it up. Properly identify what weeds you have out there, and then take appropriate treatment measures. To see a very good reference for identifying these weeds, print out (in color if possible) this 24-page publication titled "Early Spring Weeds of No-till Production," found here:

<http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/regpubs/NCR614.pdf>. In addition, review Extension Weed Specialist Bob Hartzler's comments on this topic in the most recent ISU ICM News:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2008/032601BH01.htm>. Start clean – it pays!

Spring Wheat in NW Iowa? I have received several calls about planting wheat in NW Iowa. For some, they are trying to replace oat acres needed for summer manure application. A few are looking at an alternative crop. Iowa was a major wheat producing state in the 1800's to the early 1900's. But, there are risks. We do a great job of producing corn and beans in NW Iowa, and those crops likely have lower risks in our environment – we know and have experience producing these crops, we can reasonably predict yield, and we have several local marketing options. Consider this risk in making your decision to plant wheat.

If you decide to plant wheat, I would encourage you to review a recently released publication from ISU titled "Spring Wheat in Iowa," found here:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/AG202.pdf>. It gives good hints on increasing the odds for a successful wheat harvest. For variety recommendations, see the South Dakota State University Extension publication on small grains and field peas at this site:

<http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/EC774-08.pdf>.

Alfalfa Issues – It is the first of April, and Mother Nature gave us a white April Fools joke. Winter can end any time now, in my opinion! As we warm up, we need to start looking at alfalfa fields. The end of November ice might have created some problems – so we need to analyze stands as soon as we can see evidence of growth. I encourage you to dig a few square foot areas in your fields, count how many crowns are living per square foot, then split and evaluate the color of those crowns. Fields seeded last year should have over 12 crowns, over 8 for hay seeded in 2006, and over 4 for seeding years prior to that. The University of Wisconsin has a good discussion on winter injury at their web site, and they recommend counting stems per square foot once they are growing, preferring over 55 in that area (this is probably a better predictor of production than the crown counts). Spend a little time reading this information if you are a serious alfalfa producer:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/StandEvaluationFOF.htm> .

New Soybean Management Fact Sheets Now Available - A comprehensive research project was conducted from 2004-2006 funded by the check off and the Iowa Soybean Association to investigate soybean yield limitations in Iowa. Palle Pedersen, ISU Extension Soybean Specialist led these projects. Six fact sheets have been written based on the information from that project. You can get these publications at your local ISU Extension Office (I have quite a few copies if you need more than one of each), or you can click on the links for each of the publications listed below:

[Variety selection](#)

[Soybean planting date](#)

[Row spacing in soybean](#)

[Optimum plant population in Iowa](#)

[Managing soybean cyst nematode](#)

[Managing soybean for high yield](#)

Thanks for "Subscribing!" For more information contact:

Joel DeJong, ISUE Field Agronomist
24 1st St, NW, LeMars, IA 51031
Phone 712-546-7835, FAX 712-546-7837
E-mail: jldejong@iastate.edu

Provided to you by:

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

University Extension

Plymouth County

24 1st St NW
LeMars, IA 51031
Phone 712-546-7835
FAX 712-546-7837
Email jldejong@iastate.edu

Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating
Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.