

Extension Crop Update

This newsletter, and previous issues from recent years, can be found on-line at:

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

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Weather Update: Last week we lost about another 25 GDU's from normal. It looks like we are about 300 GDU's behind normal since May 1. Soybeans, being more day-length sensitive, seem to be progressing towards maturity quite well. However, I have been in several fields that are just now reaching full dent, and that means quite a few fields are three weeks (or more) from maturity yet. That does put us close to silage harvesting time, however, so here's a good link to help you make good silage: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0817barnhart.htm>, and another from Wisconsin: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/Silage.htm>.

Fall Preparation, Part 1: Last spring, it certainly looked like we could have done a better job last year harvesting our corn crop, according to the number of volunteer corn plants we saw in some fields. This is a great time to be certain we have combines set well, and are prepared for the upcoming harvest.

Mark Hanna, in a recent ICM News Article titled "Fall Harvest Combine Considerations," wrote the following about harvest loss: "In average-to-good crop conditions when the crop is standing well, field losses attributable to the combine should be one bushel per acre or less. Two corn kernels or four soybeans on the ground per square foot equals one bushel per acre loss. Larger areas should be checked for dropped ears as a single dropped ear represents several hundred kernels. One three-fourth pound whole ear per one-hundredth acre (436 sq ft) equals a one bushel per acre loss." Check out the complete article for more ideas on this topic -

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0903hanna.htm>.

Fall Preparation, Part 2: Grain drying and storage looks like it will be a real issue this year. Start by being certain that you have a clean system, and consider treating the bins with insecticides. Check out this article on "Thinking About Stored Grain Pests Before Harvest," another recent ICM News article, at this site:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0901hodgsonholscher.htm>

I'm certainly not an expert on drying and handling grain, but when I get questions, I often use a web page from Minnesota to answer some of the questions. This site has proven very helpful over the years. Maybe you should check it out before we start handling grain this fall:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/topics.html?topic=4&subtopic=44>.

Fall Alfalfa Management – If we want to decrease the risk for winter injury, then having six to eight weeks of uninterrupted growth at the end of the season helps us to build adequate root reserves to allow a better chance

Extension Crop Update, continued

for getting those plants off to a good start next spring. That means we are at the end of the time period when we should be cutting hay. In an ICM News article from last year, Extension Forage Specialist Steve Barnhart answers some common late-season forage management questions. For example, here's one: "**Will this field be saved for hay next year?** If the answer is no, harvest anytime. There will be only slight reduction in N credits to next crop if last top growth is removed. If the field will be hay next year, take last summer cut by late August or very early September, and leave fall re-growth stand in the field - no late cut or grazing. If field was not fertilized in the summer, topdress any needed K in late August or early September." Other questions, such as taking a really late cut, along with 10 factors that improve winter survival, can be found here:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2008/0919barnhart.htm>.

White Mold - I have had several questions about a problem we have not seen much of in recent years, Sclerotinia Stem Rot of soybean, or White Mold. Similar reports are coming in from other soybean areas this year, too. Most important at this time is to recognize the problem, take notes, and identify resistant varieties to use in the future. General information and photos on White Mold can be found at:

http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/soyhealth/pdf/whitemold_06.pdf

Also a recent article on White Mold Management was posted last month in the ICM News at:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0814yangsavi.htm>.

Think SAFETY! While farm tractors and other farm equipment comprise a small percent of total motor vehicles nationally, the percentage of fatal motor vehicle collisions involving farm equipment is almost five times higher than other vehicle collisions. In crashes involving farm vehicles, the farm vehicle operator was killed nearly twice as often as an occupant of the other motor vehicle. The most likely types of collisions are left-turn and rear-end collisions. The left-turn collision happens when the farm vehicle is about to make a wide left turn and the vehicle behind begins to pass. The second most common incident is the rear-end collision, where another vehicle approaches farm equipment and is unable to slow down to avoid a collision.

Reduce the risk! Before you start hauling loads or driving equipment down the road, get behind each of your tractors, combines and wagons to insure that they are visible. I have frequently come upon equipment that isn't properly marked, the lights don't work right, or they just are not lit. Check them, and then check them again!

"Thanks for Subscribing!"