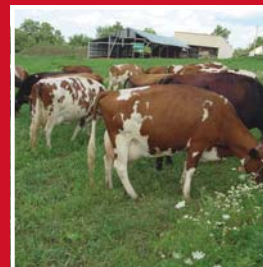


FIELD & FEEDLOT



NORTHWEST AREA EXTENSION

JULY 2007 ISSUE

Crop Watch Blog

By Paul Kassel, ISU Extension Field Agronomist

Crop conditions in Iowa can change rapidly during the growing season. That's why Iowa State University and Iowa Farmer Today have teamed up to launch CropWatch Blog.

The new website features 13 agronomy specialists from Iowa State and industry partners of ISU's Corn and Soybean Initiative. They will post reports of crop conditions, weed problems, and disease and pest threats as they arise in fields across Iowa. CropWatch Blog, which went live on May 10, is accessible from the home page of Iowa Farmer Today, <http://www.iowafarmertoday.com>, or directly at <http://www.iowafarmertoday.com/blog>. The blog will be continuously updated throughout the growing season, as the crop experts become aware of changing conditions important to Iowa farmers. Visitors to the site can pose questions to bloggers or report conditions in their areas.

Its Time for Pest Scouting

By Mark Licht, ISU Extension Field Agronomist

As many of the post-emergence herbicides have been applied and the dangers from black cutworm cutting is over, it's time to start scouting for the next group of pests; Corn Rootworms, Western Bean Cutworm, Bean Leaf Beetles and Soybean Aphids. As we move through July scouting can prove useful, but also consider keeping an eye on the Integrated Crop Management newsletter (<http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm>) for helpful hints and tips.

Corn Rootworms

Corn rootworm hatches started to occur in southeast Iowa as early as Memorial Day and reports have been steadily coming in since then. Mid-July is the time to start examining corn rootworm injury on corn roots. Root injury is not difficult to evaluate as long as you understand the rating system. Using the Iowa State node-injury scale (0 – 3) you are looking for the number of nodes eaten back to within 2 inches and the percentage of the node missing.

For example:

- 0.00 = no feeding (lowest possible rating)
- 1.00 = one node eaten (or equivalent as partially eaten nodes can be combined)
- 1.50 = one and a half nodes eaten
- 2.25 = two and a quarter nodes eaten
- 3.00 = three or more nodes eaten (highest possible rating)

For additional descriptions of corn rootworm nodal feeding and an interactive node injury scale visit:

<http://www.ent.iastate.edu/pest/rootworm/nodeinjury/nodeinjury.html>.

Western Bean Cutworm

Western bean cutworm has become a significant pest of corn over the last couple of years. During the 2006 growing season moths were found from Nebraska to Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. Expect to start seeing moth flights in late June. The moths will search for the most mature corn that is silking and tasseling. Again this year, there will be pheromone trap data that will indicate the need for scouting and peak moth flights.

To scout corn, check 20 consecutive plants at 5 locations within a field. The University of Nebraska recommends the consideration of insecticide use if 8% of the plants have egg masses or young larvae. If insecticide is needed it should be applied when 90 – 95% of the tassels have emerged. And if tassels have already emerged timing is when 70 – 90% of eggs are hatched.

Bean Leaf Beetles

Overwintering bean leaf beetles had damaged early planted soybean this spring due to very few bean fields emerged and in some cases fields that were located near pasture and CRP. The decision on how to manage bean leaf beetle first must include whether or not to manage bean pod mottle virus. The greatest incidence of bean pod mottle virus occurs with the first generation of the beetle around mid-July.

Using the management guide flowchart you can easily decide what management is appropriate based on field history, planting information and beetle numbers. The management guide flowchart can be found at: http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/2005/5-2-2005/isu_flowchart.pdf.

Soybean Aphids

Soybean aphids have been reported to the northeast of Iowa in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan as early as the last days of May. Scout for soybean aphids to avoid having damaging impacts on yields. Yield loss is related to aphid density at specific crop stages on the condition of the crop. Greatest yield loss is when aphid populations are highest at the beginning flower stage.

Learn to speed scout using this interactive tool: <http://www.ent.iastate.edu/soybeanaphid/speedscouting>.

Soybean Rust Update

By Joel DeJong, ISU Extension Field Agronomist

With the report that soybean rust was allegedly found in Iowa last winter, some people have had an increase in interest in this topic. However, there now seems to be serious doubt that rust was alive on any Iowa soybean plants during the past growing season. Even if it had been here in one field last fall, it would have not survived an Iowa winter – and the potential would still have to be transported to Iowa from the southern part of the U.S. where it might have overwintered.

The good news, late frost this spring really reduced the areas where rust made it through the winter. The national soybean rust monitoring network is again in place to watch movement, and it again looks like rust is off to a slow start in the SE portion of the United States due to drought conditions for much of the area where it did survive the winter. During mid-June, conditions in the SE part of the US did change to a more favorable climate (warmer with a lot more precipitation), but new reports are slow to come in at the time of this writing. I suspect by early July more rust reports will come in from that area of the country.

This spring also brought earlier reports of rust found in Louisiana compared to last year. I get concerned about this because the pathway from Louisiana to the upper Midwest is more direct than the pathway for rust movement from the SE to the Midwest. But good news can be found there, too. Louisiana has been dry in the north part of the state, and weather patterns look to be moving any available rust spores to the Gulf rather than to the north – at least through mid-June. However, rust areas seem to be increasing in the southern part of the state.

All in all, if rust is not widely distributed in the south by now, our rust risk for 2007 is not likely very high. However, the sentinel plot system set up throughout Iowa is still in place, and will continue to monitor closely for any rust appearance in Iowa. States south of Iowa will do the same – in effect creating an “early warning” system. If rust approaches Iowa, I am certain you will be able to keep well advised via the media.

If you want to follow the locations and movement of soybean rust in the United States, go to this national Soybean Rust Web Page: <http://sbrusa.net/>.

ProBeef 07 to be Held September 5-7

By Dennis DeWitt, ISU Extension Livestock Field Specialist

The ProBeef 07 Conference will bring agricultural scientists from around the world to discuss the global influence the ethanol industry has on agriculture today and in the future. The event is expected to attract beef and dairy producers, nutritionists, along with biorenewables and cattle industry professionals. The conference will be held at the Scheman Building on the Iowa State University campus, Sept. 5-7, 2007. Iowa State University Extension and the Iowa Beef Center are contributing sponsors.

Topics covered in these workshops include:

- Global and domestic ethanol industry
- Corn and feed grain outlook
- Economic outlook for the U.S. beef industry
- Review of ruminant digestion and metabolism
- Feeding corn co-products
- Kinetics of marbling in cattle
- Effects of corn byproducts and
- New technologies in corn hybrids

For questions contact Dan Loy, Extension Livestock Specialist, (515) 294-1058, dloy@iastate.edu, Beth Doran doranb@iastate.edu, Dennis DeWitt dewitt@iastate.edu, or ISU Conference Services, at 515-294-6222 or ucs-info@iastate.edu. Registration is available online at <http://www.ucs.iastate.edu/probeef07>

Center of the Nation Sheep Seminars Sale Set for August 4 in Spencer

By Dennis DeWitt, ISU Extension Livestock Field Specialist

Leading sheep breeders from across the country are expected to travel to Spencer, Iowa, Saturday, August 4 for the only sheep seedstock seminar & sale of its type, exclusively featuring breeding stock backed by National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP) expected progeny differences (EPDs). The second annual Center of the Nation NSIP Sheep Seminar and sale hosted by the Northwest Iowa Sheep Producers and ISU Extension will be held at the Clay County Fairgrounds, Spencer.

The free educational seminars are an important part of the national event focused on improving sheep flock productivity and ultimately profitability, through the use of NSIP EPDs. A Friday, August 3 seminar designed for breeders using the NSIP will begin at 3:30 p.m. in the swine barn. Sheep breeders whose flocks are enrolled in NSIP, or who are thinking about starting NSIP are welcome to attend. Dr. Larry Kuehn, U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC), Clay Center, Nebr., and NSIP Ovine EPD data coordinator Alan Culham, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. will lead discussion.

Dennis DeWitt, Iowa State University Extension Livestock Specialist, will moderate the all-producer seminar Saturday August 4 starting at 10 a.m. Dr. Kuehn will highlight how to select both maternal and terminal-cross rams using EPDs to increase bottom-line profits. Dr. Suelee Robb-Austerman, Iowa State University will give producers guidelines on the care and handling on newly purchased rams. “These presentations will be of value to all commercial and purebred producers regardless of the size of their flock,” said DeWitt. The Northwest Iowa Lamb Producers will serve a lamb lunch following the seminar as attendees have a chance to visit with consignors and preview sale consignments.

“We expect more than 100 top-quality stud rams and breeding ewe consignments from Suffolk, Polypay, Hampshire, Targhee, Dorset, and Columbia breeders from eight states,” said sale committee member Deb Park, Woodbine, Iowa. “Interest in this year’s event is at an all-time high and we’re pleased with the positive feedback from last year’s attendees.”

“The sale includes outstanding yearling rams, yearling ewes, ram lambs and ewe lambs bred to add value to commercial and purebred sheep operations through genetic predictability. With the exception of wool breeds, all entries will be slick-shorn, so buyers can easily see the animal’s true confirmation, as well as have access to a variety of valuable genetic evaluation records for traits of most value and importance,” said sale committee member Kathy Krafka Harkema, Montezuma, Iowa.

The Sale will begin promptly at 1 p.m. “This year, with more sheep with even higher EPDs to choose from, we’ll start on time to get buyers and their sheep purchases on the road to new homes as quickly as possible,” said sale committee member Jerry Sorensen, Harlan. “I have had an opportunity to review the EPDs on some of the maternal rams (Polypay and Targhee) and was pleasantly surprised. A commercial flock wanting to raise their own replacements can find some very valuable sheep in the sale.”

Kathy Krafka Harkema said terminal-cross sheep consignments are also impressive. “With feed and fuel costs skyrocketing, investing in sheep with excellent EPDs to accelerate your flock’s growth is more important than ever to get more for your time and money. Buying sheep with EPDs provides a powerful predictor of the value you can expect from each entry in this truly unique sale featuring quality rams and ewes from the nation’s leading breeders for use in all types of sheep operations.”

Al Conover, Baxter, Iowa, will serve as the sale auctioneer and manager. To obtain a sale catalog, call Conover Auction Service at 641-227-3537 or request by e-mail at conover@conoverauction.com

For more information on the seminars contact: Dennis DeWitt, 712-336-3488, dewitt@iastate.edu

2007 Leasing Meetings

By Ron Hook, ISU Extension Farm Management Specialist

The results of the most recent cash rental rate and land value surveys showed strong upward pressure on both cash rents and land values. The state average cash rental rate rose by \$13 per acre to \$150 and the state average land value rose by \$290 per acre to \$3204. These surveys are part of the information that will be covered in the upcoming farmland leasing workshops scheduled in northwest Iowa.

The renewable fuels industry’s impact on grain prices has been significant. Establishing a fair rental amount in light of these new developments will be presented as part of the workshops this year. Along with traditional cash and share rent leases, flexible cash leases will also be discussed as a way to allow rent to vary with current conditions. The impact on how the sharing of government program payments is impacted will be shown as well.

These workshops will also cover the basic provisions of a written farm lease. The various clauses that should be included in a written lease will be explained during the workshop. These include the term or length of the lease, owner’s share of expenses in a crop share lease, the duties of the operator with regard to maintaining soil fertility, conservation compliance and government program eligibility. The processes of terminating a lease and perfecting the landlord’s lien will be covered.

Most counties in northwest Iowa will be hosting a leasing workshop. They are designed to assist landowners, tenants and other ag business professionals with financial issues related to farmland ownership, management, leasing agreements and related issues. If you would like additional information about these workshops contact Ron Hook, 712-754-3648 or Tom Olsen, 712-732-5056. Pre-registration for these workshops is requested, so call the host county Extension office and make your reservation today. Included in the registration fee is the “Farmland Leasing – 2007” book with current leasing publications and forms.

Support Your County Fair!

By Jerry Weiss, ISU Extension Swine Field Specialist

During the months of July, August and September every county in Iowa will have a county fair.

Youth from the ages of 10—19 have been working on projects for a number of months. The purpose for these projects are to have a learning experience. Several people including parents, leaders, teachers, ISU Extension staff and others have been involved in this learning process.

Attend your county fair and support today’s youth!