

## **Extension Notes**

Personal Column for October 28, 2009

By Gary Hall, ISU Regional Extension Education Director

### **Quick and Dirty on:**

#### **Drying Soybeans**

The wet conditions are leading to lots of calls about harvesting, storing and drying wet beans. Everyone can benefit by knowing this information as soybean harvest continues.

The short answer is this:

Harvest works best (least damage) with beans 13-15% moisture.

Safe storage moisture is 13% for just through the winter, 12% for into next summer, and 11% for a year or more.

With a full aeration floor in the bin, beans up to 15% can probably be dried with a small aeration fan, beans up to 17% can probably be dried with a big drying fan (no added heat).

Heated drying can be done with caution. Don't raise drying air temperature by more than 20 degrees and don't get drying air below 45% relative humidity.

#### **Multicolored Asian Lady Beetles**

You can't help but to overhear a number of conversations about the masses of beetles congregating on the sides of buildings and making their way into your home. These insects deserve a little more explanation because although they are considered "beneficial" insects during the growing season, they can be serious nuisances now as they aggregate for overwintering.

The USDA first imported these beetles to the United States in the late 70s and early 80s to help with aphid control. They are efficient aphid predators that possess biting/chewing mouthparts that can also deliver an irritating bite to people. If enough beetles congregate inside a home they can also cause a small odor problem, may stain certain substrates when smashed, and occasionally cause an allergic reaction in some individuals.

If there are significant numbers of beetles in your area this fall it probably means that aphids were plentiful in nearby crops and other plants this past summer. These beetles are primarily attracted to the south- and west-facing sides of structures because they radiate/reflect the most heat. Control with a vacuum cleaner, broom and dustpan or have your cat chase them out the door. Insecticides can also be used but consider the cost, use of a chemical and how many insects you are dealing with. You can save money and avoid using insecticides if you have a few beetles in your home.

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Contact: Gary Hall, 2023 S Federal Ave, Mason City, IA 50401, 641-425-3116,  
[garyhall@iastate.edu](mailto:garyhall@iastate.edu)