



FARM AND HOME NEWS



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FOR THE WEEK OF June 27, 2005

Time to scout for Aphids

Aphids often occur in soybeans in northeastern Iowa around mid June, but they are difficult to find, and infestations rarely reach the economic threshold of 250 aphids per plant during June. It is recommended that producers start scouting the last week of June, or the first week of July at the very latest. Scouting can provide information on the presence of aphids and by scouting for several weeks, it can be determined whether the population is increasing or decreasing.

If you visit the Iowa Soybean Aphid Team Web site www.soybeanaphid.info this summer, you will find a map showing the counties where there have been confirmed reports of soybean aphids.

Aphid populations usually increase significantly in late July and early August. Weekly scouting of five locations in each 20 acres of a field is recommended. In addition to looking for aphids, producers should look for ants and lady beetles on soybeans they are good indicators of the presence of aphids.

When aphids are found, estimate the population size per plant. An insecticide application is recommended if the average number of aphids is 250 per plant and appears to be increasing. Stagnant or declining populations, such as those with parasitic wasps (indicated by dead aphid mummies), can occur and do not require immediate insecticide treatment. This information came from Marlin Rice, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension entomologist

Mowing your lawn

These last few weeks we have had a lot of rain and the lawns just keep growing. This means we will need to mow more often, not set the mower lower and cut it shorter. Soon it will be getting hot and then proper mowing is even more important during hot, dry weather. Mow Kentucky bluegrass lawns at a height of 3 to 3 inches during the summer months. During cool weather in spring and fall, the lawn should be mowed at a height of 2 to 3 inches. The additional leaf area during summer shades and cools the crown of the turf grass plants. Raising the mowing height during the summer months also discourages turf diseases, and can reduce the number of weeds invading your lawn. If possible, mow in the cool of the morning or evening. Mowing during the high temperatures of midday places additional stress on the turf and you.

Is a tomato a fruit or a vegetable?

There are different ways to classify or categorize plants and plant structures. Botanically, the typical plant has roots, stems, flowers and fruit. The root is the edible portion of carrots, radishes, beets and parsnips. Plants grown for their edible leaves include lettuce and spinach. Edible fruit include tomatoes, peppers, melons, snap beans, apples, pears and many others.

In common usage, a vegetable is defined as a plant eaten with the principal part of the meal. In contrast, a fruit is a plant part, which is used chiefly in desserts. Therefore, snap beans, carrots and spinach are vegetables, while apples are fruit. Botanically, the edible tomato is a fruit. In common usage, the tomato is a vegetable in that it is usually consumed during the main meal. Therefore, the tomato is both a fruit and a vegetable.

This information is provided by :Richard Jauron, ISU Horticulture Department.