

FARM and Home News

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Horses drawn vehicles

When approaching and passing a horse drawn vehicle, please remember that horses are unpredictable and can be spooked by a car or a truck. It is wise to slow down and give buggies plenty of room when you are passing and only pass when it is legal to do so. Normal speeds for horse drawn buggy range between 5-8 mph. Horse drawn vehicles may be even slower when pulling farm equipment. When at a stop sign remember to leave space between your car and the horse drawn vehicle. A buggy may back up a few feet after it comes to a stop. A good rule is to stop your vehicle far enough back so that you can see where the rear wheels of the buggy touch the road.

Firewood

Are you thinking about burning firewood in you fireplace this winter? Here are a few things you will need to think about. The first and most important is to have a trained professional inspect and clean your chimney. This is not cheap, but well worth the peace of mind. Next you will need to find a source of firewood. Some people like to cut their own, others like to have it delivered. Firewood is measured in a traditional unit called a standard cord. A standard cord is a stack of wood often portrayed as 4-foot bolts in a stack four foot high and eight foot long. Firewood cut into lengths shorter than four feet, but still piled four feet high and eight feet long, is called a face cord. Wood that is more than six inches in diameter should be split for better burning. If you are cutting the wood yourself it should be left to dry for one year before burning it in an indoor fireplace.

Store seasoned firewood under cover in an outside shed near the house. Use treated posts or timbers to form a foundation to keep the firewood 4-6 inches off the ground. Avoid storing large quantities in the house, warm garage, or basement, the warm temperature may activate fungi or insects. **Do not** spray your firewood with insecticide as it may pose a health problem when the wood is burned. If you would like to learn more about firewood use stop by the Extension office and ask for a copy of F-370 Firewood Production and Use

Soybean Aphid

Problems with this pest continue to be spotty. The research plot near Decorah decreased in population for the 2nd week in a row, however, this field was among the first infested in 2005. Early infested fields tend to peak in population mid- to late July, while later infested fields (most of the soybean fields in Iowa) tend to peak in population in early to mid-August.

Continue to scout weekly. Concentrate on the newest leaf development in both the upper and lower canopy for aphids. A later infested field site at the ISU research farm near Nashua has seen aphid populations increase from <10 per plant 2 weeks ago to about 30 per plant last week to about 200 per plant this week (population range at this site was 0 to >1,500 aphids per plant). These next 2 weeks are critical.

Don't ignore the early-infested fields if their numbers have decreased. Sometimes we get a resurgence in population in these fields in early to mid-August.

When scouting, also watch for spider mites. Continued dry weather and the presence of spider mites will influence your insecticide choice. See below in Crop Notes under spider mites.

Scout weekly through August. Brian Lang ISU Crop Field staff provides the above information. For supporting information on soybean aphids go to:
www.soybeanaphid.info