



## Shelby County Extension

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### Upcoming Events:

**September 4<sup>th</sup>**-Labor Day office closed

**September 7<sup>th</sup>**-Beginning Farmer Peer Group Meeting Part 2

**September 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>**-Carsten Farm Days

**September 21<sup>st</sup>**-Farmer's Coffee

**September 28<sup>th</sup>-Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>**-AkSarBen

School is back in session, the fields are beginning to turn colors, it time once again to turn our thoughts to harvesting crops and vegetables, as well as preparing our fields and lawns for the coming cooler weather. Several articles in this newsletter will help you get started with those tasks, but don't forget that we are always here to answer any specific questions you may have regarding crops, soils, gardens, trees, lawns, and more. Have a great fall!!

*-Amanda Oloff, Associate Extension Educator*

### DID YOU KNOW??

Ag and Hort Update is also available online!! The current issue is on our county homepage: [www.extension.iastate.edu/shelby](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/shelby). Online newsletters also contain active links to get you to websites and publications mentioned in the articles! Contact me to be added to our email list.

### Ask the ISU Garden Expert

Get answers to all your yard and garden questions at [www.yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu). For specific questions, call the Hortline at (515) 294-3108, or email [hortline@iastate.edu](mailto:hortline@iastate.edu), Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to noon and 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.

## Lawn & Garden

### Lawn Weed Control

The overall appearance of a lawn is directly related to the maintenance provided. September is an ideal time for many lawn



maintenance practices—such as weed control. To have additional questions answered, contact the horticulturists at [hortline@iastate.edu](mailto:hortline@iastate.edu) or call 515-294-3108.

### **When is the best time to apply herbicide to the lawn to control dandelions and other broadleaf weeds?**

Fall (mid-September through October) is the best time to control perennial broadleaf weeds in the lawn with broadleaf herbicides. In fall, perennial broadleaf weeds are transporting food (carbohydrates) from their foliage to their roots in preparation for winter. Broadleaf herbicides applied in fall will be absorbed by the broadleaf weed's foliage and transported to the roots along with the carbohydrates, resulting in the destruction of the broadleaf weeds.

### **How do I control creeping Charlie in my lawn?**

Ground ivy ("creeping Charlie") in lawns can be controlled with broadleaf herbicides. Products that contain 2,4-D or triclopyr are most effective. 2,4-D is an active ingredient in many broadleaf herbicide products. Triclopyr can be found in Ortho Weed-B-Gon Chickweed, Clover, and Oxalis Killer for Lawns

and a few other products. In Iowa, herbicide applications should be made between mid-September and Nov. 1. Two applications are necessary to effectively control ground ivy. The first application should be made in mid to late September, the second a month later.

For more information on Lawn Weed Control visit <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/yard-and-garden-lawn-weed-control>

## Everything about Onions

### When should onion be harvested?

Onions should be harvested when most of the tops have fallen over and begun to dry. Carefully pull or dig the bulbs with the tops attached.

### What is the proper way to store onions?

After harvesting, dry or cure the onions in a warm, dry, well-ventilated location, such as a shed or garage. Spread out the onions in a single layer on a clean, dry surface. Cure the onions for two to three weeks until the onion tops and necks are thoroughly dry and the outer bulb scales begin to rustle.

After the onions are properly cured, cut off the tops about one inch above the bulbs. As the onions are topped, discard any that show signs of decay. Use the thick-necked bulbs as soon as possible as they don't store well. An alternate preparation method is to leave the onion tops untrimmed and braid the dry foliage together.

Place the cured onions in a mesh bag, old nylon stocking, wire basket or crate. It's important that the storage container allow air to circulate through the onions. Store the onions in a cool, moderately dry location. Storage temperatures should be 32 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The relative humidity should be 65 to 70 percent. Possible storage locations include a basement, cellar, or garage. Hang the braided onions from a rafter or ceiling. If storing the onions in an unheated garage, move the onions to an alternate storage site before temperatures drop below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

For more information on the storing your bountiful harvest from your garden, visit

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/yard-and-garden-harvesting-drying-and-storing-onions>

## **Blue Eyed Mold Threatens Stored Grain**

Due to a combination of temperature and humidity last fall, producers need to be aware of the high risk of blue eye mold, a fungus that grows on corn kernels.

Blue eye mold appears as a blue line down the middle of a corn kernel, where the germ is located. The fungus invades the kernel and feeds on the high fat oil located in the germ. There is no way to get rid of blue eye mold, but there are ways to control its spread.

Carbon dioxide monitoring is one way to observe corn conditions in bins. However, blue eye mold does not grow at a fast enough pace to give off a detectable amount of heat.



“Aerating the corn with humid air, like what the state has been experiencing recently, will make the mold grow,” said Charles Hurburgh, grain quality and handling specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. “If the dew points get down to the 40s and 50s relative humidity then fans should be run. Additionally, grain that is still cold from the winter should not be warmed.”

For more information on Blue Eyed Mold Threatens Stored Grain visit

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/node/41949/or-contact-the-extension-office>.

## **Charcoal Rot is a Hidden Threat to Soybean Yield**

The persistent hot weather in many areas of the country this growing season may be conducive to the development of charcoal rot disease in soybean. Farmers, agronomists, crop consultants and specialists are encouraged to scout for this

particular disease now. Although charcoal rot is most severe in years and areas experiencing hot, dry weather, this disease can also cause losses when ample moisture is present, making it a hidden threat to yield.



“The fungus generally infects soybean seedlings early in the growing season, yet foliar symptoms may not appear until mid-season or later during reproductive growth stages,” said Kiersten Wise, associate professor and extension grain crops specialist at University of Kentucky. “Symptoms generally develop as a result of an external stress, such as drought or high temperatures and are easy to confuse with several other diseases and disorders, including soybean cyst nematode injury, early senescence and drought stress.”

The causal fungus spreads from the roots to the stem, filling tissues with small, dark, round fungal structures called microsclerotia. These structures clog vascular tissue, causing wilting, yellowing, and stunting of the plant, which is more apparent in drought-stressed areas.

“It is important to determine if charcoal rot is present because microsclerotia can survive in soil for several years and the fungus can infect a number of rotation crops, including corn, cotton and grain sorghum, which limits the effectiveness of tillage and rotation for managing the disease,” said Daren Mueller, associate professor and extension plant pathology specialist at Iowa State University.

For more information on Charcoal Rot Is A Hidden Threat to Soybean Yield visit

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/charcoal-rot-hidden-threat-soybean-yield>

### **Words From Our ISU Field Agronomist Mike Witt**

Cover crops: We are fastly approaching the time for cover crop seeding to begin in the area. More and more farmers are utilizing cover crops for their benefits of improving soil health, quality and productivity. They are also seeing some benefits in reduction of erosion, less nitrate leaching and the suppression of winter annual and early season weeds. Cover crops are not without risks, however and understanding the goals you personally want to achieve with the cover crops on your operation will drive your decisions.

I always say when starting or utilizing cover crops to start small and utilize an “easier” crop until you understand what you are dealing with. Too many farmers leap before they look with cover crops and have a bad experience. The most widely used cover crops that survive the winter are Winter Cereal Rye and Winter Wheat. The options that winter kill in Iowa that are most adopted include Oats, Spring Wheat and Brassicas (radish, turnips, mustards) or Legumes (Crimson clover, etc.). There are some exceptions to every rule but the cover crops listed above fit into those categories 98% of the time. Seeding method and timing of a cover crop will also make or break your success. As a general rule the sooner you can plant your cover crop the better but it has to fit into your system and what species you select can handle. Most seeding in soybeans is done either with interseeding into standing soybeans or directly after harvest. For corn there is some work on interseeding but the vast majority is planted after harvest. This seeding is accomplished by either drilling/planting the cover crop, broadcast seeding or aerial applying. Each method has pros and cons so selecting what works best for you both financially and management wish is important. Overall cover crops are starting to gain some adoption across Iowa with more and more farmers understanding how to work with them and the benefits they provide. I foresee this trend continuing in the future as more studies and research on the topic is done.

## **Farm Management Specialist Answer**

### **Extreme Weather Questions**

Iowa farmers have seen their fair share of extreme weather conditions during the 2017 growing season. Farmers in the southeast and northwest portions of the state are dealing with drought, while those in the north and northeast have seen extensive flooding.

Losses due to drought and flooding are insurable under multiple peril



crop insurance, and the August issue of [Ag Decision Maker](#) seeks to [answer frequently asked questions about crop insurance](#). Iowa State University Extension and Outreach farm management specialists Charles Brown and Steve Johnson authored the article.

Approximately 90 percent of the 23.5 million of acres of corn and soybeans planted in 2017 are insured using Revenue Protection multiple peril crop insurance. Once an insured farmer recognizes crop loss they should notify their insurance agent within 72 hours of discovering the damage. Despite damage to a crop, farmers should continue caring for it using “good farming practices” and get permission from the insurance company before destroying or putting any crop to an alternative use.

The spring price for calculating the minimum guaranteed revenue for corn is \$3.96 per bushel and \$10.19 per bushel for soybeans. This will be calculated again in October to get a fall or harvest price. If the harvest price is higher than the spring price, the harvest price will be used to calculate the guaranteed revenue. There is a maximum of twice the projected 2017 price for the harvest price; \$7.92 per bushel for corn and \$20.38 per bushel for

soybeans.

Provided their claim is for more than \$200,000, farmers will be asked to verify their production, which includes a three-year audit.

Additional questions answered in the article include:

- What is the difference among insurance units?
- When will farmers be receiving indemnity payments for their crop insurance losses?
- Can indemnity payments for drought be deferred for income tax purposes until 2018?

Further resources and information on issues related to drought can be found at the ISU Extension and Outreach “[Dealing with Drought](#)” webpage.

The Ag Decision Maker website also offers resources providing more information on [crop insurance](#).

For more information on Extreme Weather problems and other Farm Management questions visit Ag Decision Maker at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/farm-management-specialists-answer-extreme-weather-questions>

### **More Information Coming Soon!**

Shelby County Extension & Outreach is excited to announce that we will be hosting a program through Women in Agriculture Education called “Managing for Today and Tomorrow: Farm Transition Planning”. This program will be a 5 week course in November and early December, The decisions made during business, estate retirement, and succession planning are combined to form a farm transition. The course will be facilitated by ISU Extension Farm Management Specialist, Shane Ellis. More information on dates coming soon.

.and justice for all

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Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.