AG newsletter

Washington County Extension
2223 250th Street
Washington, Iowa 52353
319-653-4811

June 2010

www.extension.iastate.edu/washington

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"The fees for service will be used to off-set direct expenses and to support the County Extension ANR Program."

Iowa County Pasture Walk Set for June 17

Holbrook, Iowa – Beef producers are invited to attend a pasture walk, scheduled for Thursday, June 17, at the Bob Faber farm located 2 miles east of Holbrook. "We have a great agenda planned with presentations that any beef producer would find useful," says Byron Leu, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension Program Specialist. Speakers slated for the seminar include Faber, Leu, Steve Barnhart, ISU Professor of Agronomy—Forages, and Steve Johnson, NRCS District Conservationist.

Topics to be presented include: Forage species identification, introduction of legumes, paddock system layout, and importance of water and animal flow in rotational systems.

The pasture walk begins at 6:00 p.m. and will include a meal. Attendees should RSVP by calling the Iowa County Extension Office (319)642-5504 by June 14 so meal arrangements can be finalized.

Directions: from Holbrook, take F52 east 2 miles to the pasture location. Signs to the pasture walk will be posted. The pasture walk is sponsored by Iowa Forage and Grassland Council, Southern Iowa Forage and Livestock Committee, Iowa County Extension, Iowa Beef Center at ISU, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Iowa County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Iowa County Cattlemen's Association.

Northeast ISU Research Farm Field Day, Nashua, June 30, 1:00-4:00 pm

Field day speakers include: Ken Pecinovsky, Farm Superintendent, Robert Hartzler, ISU Extension Weed Scientist, Alison Robertson, ISU Extension Plant Pathologist, John Sawyer, ISU Extension Soil Fertility Specialist, Chad Ingels, ISU Extension Program Specialist, and Brian Lang, ISU Extension Agronomist. CCA Credits available for a fee.

BIO-ENERGY CROPS RESEARCH FEATURED AT SPRING FIELD DAY ON JUNE 24

The annual spring field day for the Iowa State University Southeast Iowa Research Farm near Crawfordsville will be on June 24, with tours beginning at 1:00 p.m. Iowa State University Extension provides research-based information and education to help people make better decisions, in their personal, community and professional lives. One of the features on the tour will be Dr. Emily Heaton's presentation on "Research on Miscanthus & Other Crops for Cellulosic Ethanol." Dr. Heaton is an ISU agronomist whose research has focused on perennial energy crops. "There could be new opportunities for Iowa farmers to grow perennial crops, such as switchgrass, for fuel in the near future," according to Jim Fawcett, ISU Extension Field Agronomist.

Also highlighted on the tour will be "Crop Season Review & Soil Drainage Research Results" by Kevin Van Dee, farm superintendent, and Matt Helmers, ISU Extension Ag Engineer; "Cover Crops & Nitrogen Management" by John Sawyer, ISU Extension Agronomist; and "New Developments in Soybean Aphid Management' by Erin Hodgson, ISU Extension Entomologist.

Certified Crop Advisor continuing education credits will be available for attending the event. Those wishing to obtain additional CCA credits can come at 8:30 a.m. for a morning training session with a focus on soil drainage. The credit fee for Certified Crop Advisors is $50.00 (or $25 for the afternoon only) and includes lunch. There is no fee for the afternoon tours. A lunch will be available at noon for $8. Please register by June 22 for the morning CCA session and the noon lunch by calling the Johnson County Extension Office at 319-337-2145.

To reach the farm, follow U.S. Highway 218 one and three quarters miles south of Crawfordsville, then two miles east on county road G-62, then three quarters mile north. Signs will be posted to guide you to the event.

Muscatine Island Research Farm Field Day-75th Anniversary, Fruitland, June 29

The Muscatine Island Research and Demonstration Farm was founded 75 years ago. A special field day will include many special events in addition to the traditional field day. If you have an interest in horticulture, be sure to attend. Information will appear soon at www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/eccrops/meetmusc.html.

NITROGEN LOSSES

Some areas have received considerably above normal rainfall this spring for the third year in a row, which will likely again result in nitrogen losses. In a trial done in Linn County with CSI partner Linn Cooperative in 2008 we saw about a 70 bu/A higher yield with spring applied nitrogen versus fall applied because of the larger N losses with the fall application. One way to help make decisions on nitrogen management is to pull 1-foot soil samples when the corn is 6-12" tall to see if there is adequate nitrogen left for optimum yields. Some of the corn is still at the correct stage to pull the soil samples. It is best to use a systematic method rather than a random method to pull the samples. Pull the first sample in the corn row, the next 1/8 of the distance between rows, the next ¼ the distance between rows, etc. until you have worked your way across the rows. Do this at least twice for a total of 16 cores. This way you won't by chance happen to be over or under representing areas that have differing amounts of nitrogen (i.e., anhydrous bands, manure bands, starter fertilizer, etc.). Samples need to be mailed to a soil testing lab immediately after being pulled. If the results show a need for additional nitrogen, there is still time to get a side-dress application made. For more details see the publication "Nitrogen Fertilizer Recommendations for Corn in Iowa" at www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1714.pdf.

REPLANT DECISIONS

A considerable acreage of corn has been replanted in the southern counties due to seedling rot. At this late date it takes stand losses of greater than 50% to justify replanting. The most recent chart on planting date verses population is in Table 2 at www.agronext.iastate.edu/corn/production/management/planting replanting.html. Note

that a perfect stand planted at this time is expected to yield 70% as much as if it had been planted a month ago. Then, note in the April 20 – May 5 column, a uniform stand of 10,000 plants per acre will give nearly an identical yield. Numerous gaps of up to 4-6 feet can reduce yields by an additional 5-6%. For more information on the effect of gaps, see NCR 344 "Uneven Emergence in Corn" at www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/NCR344.pdf. There is also useful information on non-uniform emergence at www.agronext.iastate.edu/corn/production/management/early/height.html. At this time producers may want to consider reducing the maturity of corn to be planted by about 5 days.

ISU Weed Science Field Day - June 24

ISU Weed Science will hold the annual Weed Science Field Day on June 24 at 8:30 a.m. at the Curtiss Farm on South State Street, Ames, Iowa. Registration for the field day is $20 and includes coffee, beverages, snacks and a field book. If you have questions about the event, please contact Mike Owen at mdowen@iastate.edu or 515-294-5936.

Growing Degree Day Update

Growing degree day information at the ISU Research farms is available online. It allows the visitor to select a starting date from a drop-down menu and get GDD accumulations for all the ISU research farms. www.mesonet.agron.iastate.edu/GIS/apps/agclimate/gsplot.html

County Fair Dates

Below are the dates for the county fairs in Region 15. Over 1,300 4-H youth will be showcasing their skills and projects. To learn more about each county fair contact your local Extension Office.

Iowa County Fair-July 15-18, Marengo
Keokuk County Expo-July 13-19, Sigourney
Washington County Fair-July 18-23, Washington
Johnson Co. 4-H/FFA Fair-July 26-29, Iowa City

Eastern Iowa Forage Prices

These are hay prices paid at auction in recent weeks. Much of the price information is obtained from USDA Hay Market News. Personal contacts of local Iowa hay auctions secured price information for these market outlets. Auctions were chosen to reflect prices across Iowa. Other nearby auctions may exist. No endorsement of the listed auctions is intended.

Keosauqua (SE IA) Sat 11:30A Alfalfa & mixed: SmSq $3.00-6.00/bale Grass : SmSq $2.25-3.50/bale Straw: SmSq $2.00-2.50/bale

Kalona (SE IA) 1st Wed, Yr-round 11:30AM Wed. (& 3rd Wed Oct-winter) Alfalfa: (SmSq $3.00-4.20/bale; LgRd $41-56/B Mar) Mixed Leg/Gr: SmSq $4.00-4.90/bale; LgSq $60-67/b; (LgRd $42.50-62.50/T Mar) Grass: (SmSq $4.00/bale Mar); LgRd $55/bale Cornstalks: LgRd $17/bale

Potato Leafhoppers

In general yields have been very good for the first cutting of alfalfa. Potato leafhoppers (PLH) are now being found in some alfalfa fields. They should not be an issue for hay that has not yet been cut, but may be an issue as alfalfa begins to re-grow for the second cutting. PLH scouting and threshold information can be found at www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0615hodgson.htm
Don't forget to check for PLH in new alfalfa seedings under oat canopies.

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Ask the ISU Extension Garden Experts: About Trees

My sycamore tree is dropping its leaves. Is the tree dying?
The sycamore is not dying. The leaf drop is likely due to anthracnose. Anthracnose is a common fungal disease of sycamore, ash, maple, oak and other trees. Anthracnose is most severe in years with cool, wet spring weather. While anthracnose may cause extensive defoliation, it does not cause serious harm to healthy, well-established trees. Symptoms of anthracnose on sycamores include brown blotches on the leaves, death of young buds and shoots, and leaf drop. In cool, wet springs, affected sycamores may lose most of their initial foliage. Fortunately, the sycamore trees will continue to produce additional leaves and shoots through early summer. Foliage that develops in late spring and early summer shouldn't become infected as warmer, drier weather suppresses anthracnose. Most sycamores should have a good canopy of leaves by late June or early July. Since anthracnose does not cause serious harm to sycamores, fungicide treatments are rarely warranted.

How often should I water a newly planted tree?
The key to watering newly planted balled and burlapped and container-grown trees is to keep the plant's root-ball moist for several weeks after planting. Water newly planted trees every day for six or seven days and then gradually reduce the frequency of watering. When watering, slowly apply water to the root-ball and the surrounding soil. A thorough watering every seven to 10 days (in dry weather) should be sufficient four to six weeks after planting. Continue this watering schedule through summer and into fall. Small trees usually require watering for one or two growing seasons. It may be necessary to periodically water large trees for two or three years.

There are erect, hair-like growths on the upper leaf surface of my maple tree. Should I be concerned?
The hair-like growths are likely galls. Galls are abnormal growths of plant tissue induced to form by mites, insects or other small organisms. The hair-like gall on the maple leaves is probably the maple spindle gall. Maple spindle galls are yellowish green and about 1/5 inch long. They are as thick as the lead in a pencil. The galls are somewhat thicker in the middle than at the ends, hence the common name of spindle gall. Maple spindle galls are caused by extremely small mites that are only 1/125 inch long. The adult mites spend the winter under the bark and other protective places on the trees. In the early spring, the adults move to the developing, unfolding leaves and begin feeding. The leaf responds to the small irritation by rapidly producing extra cells that form the abnormal growth at the feeding site. The gall encloses the mite which continues to feed and lay numerous eggs within the gall. Reproduction is prolific and as the new mites mature, they leave the gall and move to other newly emerging leaves to repeat the process. Only new leaves are capable of producing galls. Mite activity continues until mid-summer when it starts to decline. While galls, such as the maple spindle gall, are unsightly, they do not cause serious harm to healthy, well-established trees. Galls cannot be "cured" once they have formed. Preventative insecticide treatments are seldom warranted.

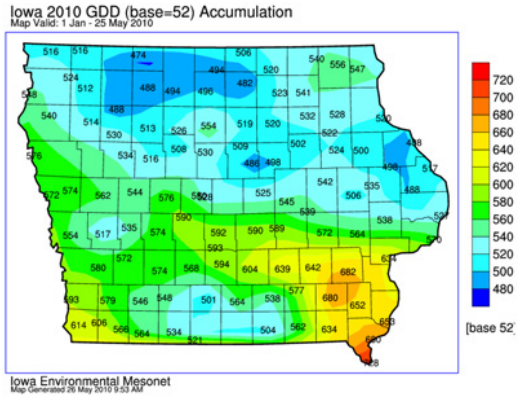
Predicted 2010 Corn Rootworm Hatch

By Erin Hodgson, Department of Entomology and Adam Sisson, Corn and Soybean Initiative

There were several reports of lightning bugs (fireflies) throughout the state last week. Some people correlate fireflies with corn rootworm larval hatch in the Midwest. Based on conversations with Marlin Rice, former ISU entomologist, and Mike Gray, entomologist from University of Illinois, they believe these events are unrelated. Instead, corn rootworm hatch predictions are more accurately based on temperature accumulations.

Research shows about fifty percent of corn rootworm larvae will hatch from 684 to 767 accumulated growing degree days (base 52 F). The map below displays the number of accumulated degree days from Jan. 1 to May 25 for Iowa. Corn rootworm hatch should be happening in the southeast part of the state. Other parts of the state should experience larval hatch in the next 7 days.

Damage from corn rootworm



This map was created by Iowa Environmental Mesonet, Dept. of Agronomy at ISU.

Scouting

Ideally, every corn field should be inspected for corn rootworm larvae after reaching 50 percent hatch. Non-Bt fields are most susceptible to larval damage and should be considered a priority. Continuous Bt corn fields with previous damage should also be scouted. Sample for larvae by digging up corn plants and washing the roots in a bucket; larvae should float to the top of the water. Sample corn plants in different areas of the field to estimate infestation levels.

New Invasive Insect Confirmed in Iowa

By Erin Hodgson, Department of Entomology

The Iowa Emerald Ash Borer Team confirmed the presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Iowa on May 14. Four EAB larvae were found in one ash tree along the Mississippi River just two miles south of the Minnesota border in Allamakee County. The infested area is owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Iowa EAB Team is made up of members from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, USDA Animal Plant Health Inspections, USDA Forest Service, and Iowa State University Extension. The team has been scouting for EAB since 2003 using several detection methods.

Description

Larvae are creamy white with a brown head and are legless. They have flattened, bell-shaped body segments. Adults have metallic green forewings and copper red abdomens, and are approximately three- to five-eighths inch long. Adults emerge from May to August and leave distinctive "D" shaped exit holes in the outer bark of branches and trunk. Many other wood-boring beetles can be confused with EAB (e.g., bronze birch borer, two-lined chestnut borer, white-spotted pine sawyer, cottonwood borer). It is important to distinguish native wood boring beetles from EAB. Adults can be sent to ISU for positive identification.

Why care about EAB?

The first EAB confirmed in the U.S. was in southeastern Michigan in 2002. Larvae kill North American ash species, including green, white, black and blue ash. Larvae feed on phloem just below the bark and create serpentine tunnels, or galleries, that eventually kill trees. Adults will feed on leaves and create notches on leaf edges.

Several symptoms occur in EAB-infested ash trees.

- Vertical fissure on bark
- Serpentine galleries exposed if bark removed
- Galleries are filled with sawdust-like frass (excrement)
- Increased woodpecker activity
- Canopy dieback begins in top third of tree
- Shoots form at the base of the tree

Erin Hodgson is an assistant professor of entomology with extension and research responsibilities. She can be contacted by email at ewh@iastate.edu or phone (515) 294-2847.

Scouting for Soybean Seedling Diseases

By X.B. Yang and SS. Navi, Dept. of Plant Pathology

Seedling diseases are one reason to use seed treatment. Each planting season, different weather patterns result in different seedling disease problems. This planting season has been smooth in general and seedlings have emerged in many soybean fields. So far, disease risk is lighter than last year. We did, however, observe some light occurrence of seedling disease from production fields around the central Iowa. Damping-off was also found in our research plots. It is now time to check your soybean fields to determine if there are any seedling disease problems.

With weather conditions better than last planting season, we should see less disease problems, especially in fields treated with fungicides. If you find significant seedling diseases in a field planted with treated soybean seeds, you should reconsider the seed treatment you used. Knowing what disease causes the problem is critical to correcting the problem in the next planting.

This year, seedling diseases caused by three fungi are likely to be found, *Pythium*, *Rhizoctonia*, and *Phytophthora*. For fields that planted early in cool soil, *Pythium* damping-off is the most likely to be found, as we did last week. In most of years, this is the first disease found in a growing season because the fungus prefers cold soil temperatures. Dead seedlings may be visible on the ground with infected plants killed before the first true leaf stage. Plants often have a rotted appearance. Leaves of infected seedlings are initially gray-green and then turn brown. A few days later, the plants die. Diseased plants are easily pulled from the soil because of rotted roots.

The symptoms of *Phytophthora* is similar to *Pythium* and can be mistaken for *Pythium* damping-off. *Phytophthora* is more likely to infect soybean plants in later planted soybean because the fungus prefers warm soil temperatures and high soil moisture.

Another disease that may be found in later plant soybean this year is *Rhizoctonia* damping-off. Caused by *Rhizoctonia* fungus, this disease likes soil temperatures warmer than that for *Pythium*. Soybean seedling disease caused by *Rhizoctonia* damping-off. Caused by *Rhizoctonia* fungus, this disease likes soil temperatures warmer than that for *Pythium*. Soybean seedling disease caused by *Rhizoctonia* exhibit symptoms different from those caused by *Phytophthora*. Unlike *Phytophthora* damping-off, stem discoloration by *Rhizoctonia* is usually limited to the cortical layer of the main root and hypocotyl. Infected stems remain firm and dry. Typical symptoms are localized brown-to-reddish brown lesions on the hypocotyl. Root rot is visible on severely infected plants.

Photos of damping off in soybeans (Photo credit SS Navi)

Seedling disease risk differs from field to field. River bottom fields are more likely to have *Pythium* and *Rhizoctonia*, sandy soil is more likely to have *Rhizoctonia*, and *Phytophthora* is more likely to occur in heavy soils. Within a field, some spots are more likely to have seedling disease than other areas. To quickly spot the disease problems, you can check areas or fields that are most likely to have disease problems. Seedling diseases usually occur first in low spots with higher soil moisture, in areas with poor drainage or in compacted areas.

SPRING FIELD DAY

June 24, 2010 • 12:00 pm

Helping You Prosper in the 21st Century

ISU Southeast Iowa Research & Demonstration Farm

Crawfordsville, Iowa

WASHINGTON CO. HEALTH DEPARTMENT
On-site from 11:30 am—1:00 pm
PROTECTION FROM THE SUN
providing
sunscreen samples, info & prizes!
Tetanus boosters—$30.00

Tours begin at 1:00 pm—stops include:

- **Crop Season Review & Soil Drainage Research Results**
  —Kevin Van Dee, Farm Superintendent
  Matt Helmers, ISU Extension Ag Engineer
- **Cover Crops & Nitrogen Management**
  —John Sawyer, ISU Extension Agronomist
- **Research on Miscanthus & Other Crops for Cellulosic Ethanol**
  —Emily Heaton, ISU Agronomist
- **New Developments in Soybean Aphid Management**
  —Erin Hodgson, ISU Extension Entomologist

Certified Crop Advisors—CCA Credits available for a fee

LUNCH—**including homemade ice cream, available at Noon for $8**
Reservation deadline: June 22
Call: Johnson County Extension Office, 319-337-2145
Email: Jim Fawcett, Fawcett@iastate.edu

Directions:
Go 1 ¾ miles south of Crawfordsville on Hwy 218, then 2 miles east on G-62, then ¾ mile north on Louisa-Washington Road. Watch for signs.

Southeast Iowa Agricultural Research Association
Crawfordsville, Iowa

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Return Service Requested

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
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Meet

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Commercial Horticulture Specialist

Serving Region 15

Areas of Expertise: golf course management, turfgrass, sports turf, orchards, integrated pest management, ornamentals, fruit/vegetable production, all aspects of growth related to cultivars selection, production management, and pest control

Frequent Clients: *CSA's, orchard owners, greenhouse managers, turf farmers, schools, vegetable producers*

What do you enjoy most about your position as a Commercial Horticulturist?
I enjoy working with new commercial fruit and vegetable growers and helping them to successfully grow crops for the first time and see the 'fruits' of their labor. I also especially enjoy working with amateur fruit tree growers. They seem to have a passion for their fruit trees. This is a group that is very appreciative of learning modern production techniques and on finding out how to graft.

What sort of activities are you involved in and which ones do you enjoy the most?
I do a variety of activities in horticulture related areas involving various production issues by fields visits, one on one consultations, field days, and other programs. I enjoy field visits the most because I can get a better understanding of the growers situation and can often times help them come up with ways to improve production.

What activities do you think producers benefit from most when they attend?
I think that question is better answered by the participants themselves. In field visits, one on one consultations, or programs I strive to provide information in a practical and useful form to which the growers can benefit.