



The Chem Gro Crop Watch, Issue #7, 8/06/09

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Soybean review: To be upfront, I am one of those people who believe that life is too short to grow soybeans, especially when you could be dedicating your time in growing all corn. However, the new crop soybean market does seem to be a bit more stable than corn. The early and mid-May planted soybeans are now in the R3 growth stage, so now is the time to start thinking about preserving the yields your soybean crop will soon be making. Just as in the corn, the current weather pattern that we have been having (cool and moist with heavy morning dews) is promoting growth of several different soybean leaf diseases. Also, don't forget many of the soybean leaf and pod feeding insects that can be found in every soybean field. I am generally a believer in Integrated Pest Management; that you should only spray for a pest when it reaches an economic threshold. However, over the years, we have learned that many individual problems that may not reach economic threshold by themselves can all add up to be economic in the end. **The cumulative yield loss effect of fungal diseases and insect feeding is always worse than each individual problem by itself.**

Soybean Diseases: There are three leaf diseases that I am seeing in most soybean fields that I am walking.

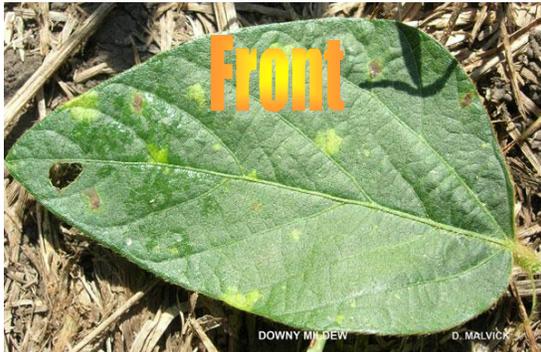
Septoria Brown Spot is a fungal disease that is common in nearly every soybean field in Central Illinois. It infects the bottom leaves in the canopy and causes them to die pre-mature. In a high moisture year like we are having, you can expect this disease to be worse in drilled or 15" rows, a thick and dense canopy, and soybeans planted on soybeans.

Bacterial Blight or Bacterial Pustule. As the name implies, this is a bacterial infection that occurs on the leaves. Frequent and heavy rains that splash infected soil on the leaves is what typically causes this disease to spread. The bad news is we have no method of controlling this disease. Since the disease causing organism is a bacterium, fungicides will not offer any protection. It is what it is when it comes to this disease.

Downy Mildew is supposed to be a more of a rare or infrequent fungal disease if you read most of the literature available from the universities. However, this is the second year in row that I am seeing this disease present in many, many fields. Because of the infrequentness of this disease, there is very little research done on yield loss data. Also, you will find that none of the current fungicides are labeled for this disease. This is most likely due that fungicide manufacturers are not going to conduct expensive studies to prove that their fungicide controls a less than common disease. I am willing to speculate since downy mildew is a foliar fungal disease that most foliar fungicides labeled for



soybeans will have some sort of level of control for downy mildew. To identify downy mildew, the soybean leaves will have yellow blotches on top of the leaf. When you flip the leaf over, there will be what looks like fluffy puffs of mold that is the actual disease.



Soybean Insects: Compared to last year, I think the insect pressure is generally a bit lower than last year. With my unscientific observations, I would say that bean leaf beetle and grasshopper populations are lower, but Japanese beetles are a lot higher and more wide spread than last year. Also, as of right now, I have not found any soybean aphids. However, with the late planted soybeans, it would not surprise me that we might see some soybean aphids move in latter during the growing season as they seem to prefer the younger, more succulent soybean plants. Again, you need to consider the combined feeding damage of all the insects could easily cost you more money in yield than the cost of the insecticide. At today's new crop soybean prices, most insecticides will cost about a 1/2 - 3/4 of bushel of soybeans.



Speaking from experience, if you are trying to kill large grasshoppers and Japanese beetles, make sure you are using the higher end of the insecticide rate. With their hard exoskeletons (hard shells), it makes it very difficult for the insecticide to penetrate through their bodies to kill their central nervous systems. Higher insecticide rates are needed to increase the toxicity level of the insecticide to get a better kill on these particular insects.

That's my 2 cents worthó ..the choice and decision is always yours.

Lonne



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