

Spider mites in soybeans

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I guess I shouldn't be surprised by anything this year so when soybeans started looking sickly, I'm not sure why I didn't immediately think spider mites! Well maybe because I've seen serious spider mite problems in soybeans maybe once or twice previously?! Spider mites are most likely to be a problem in dry years. Well, we have had some dry weather the past couple of years and mite problems were showing up on many other plants of late. Rainy windy weather tends to wash them off and many insects are predatory on mites. But populations of mites can explode and do so in a hurry! The tough part about mites is that first of all they aren't insects so chemical controls can be limited. Secondly, they tend to stay on the undersides of leaves and honestly, none of the insecticides are truly systemic so it's hard to get chemical controls on to them! And since they are so stinking small, they can be a real challenge to see, in fact we usually see damage, not the mites themselves. Look for leaves turning yellowish, then gray green and then brown and dead. Sometimes if you tap a leaf on a piece of paper you can see lots of tiny little dots scurrying around on the paper. If you've got areas where 50% of the foliage is looking damaged and you are at blooming or early pod fill, treatment may well be worthwhile. We don't have a lot of choices for mites on beans. Some of our better controls are some of the older products but check with your local supplier to see what they have that's labeled! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Keeping Seed Wheat - Quality matters!

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We honestly do not keep back as much seed wheat as we used to, but still enough that we need to remember to have quality seed to plant. To have quality seed to plant you have to start with high quality seed. Start with seed that has a test weight of at least 60 pounds per bushel so you don't have a lot of small shriveled kernels. If you don't have anything that heavy, keep back as heavy of seed as you can and then have it cleaned. More on cleaning in a moment. Also make sure that the seed is dry or you have the ability to get it dry, preferably under 12%. Sure, you're only holding it for a few months, until October, but with summer temperatures you can have spoilage issues in a hurry. Also consider applying a surface treatment to keep insects out of the grain if you don't treat it all going into storage. You want to clean the seed wheat to get out weed seeds, shrunken and shriveled kernels and of course foreign material and anything non grain. An air screen cleaner, or fanning mill if you please, can remove all of your cheat type seeds. Gravity tables are good for increasing test weight, but the air screen cleaner is going to do the bulk of the cleaning. Once you've got the seed cleaned, which you can do any time between now and planting, go ahead and send a sample in for a germination test. It's a good way to make sure it's good to plant. Finally, don't forget about seed treatments. A fungicidal seed treatment is a no-brainer in my opinion. There are so many problems you can avoid with a seed treatment, and you may want to give serious consideration to adding insecticide to that fungicide! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

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Corn leaf diseases

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We are getting to that time of year when we expect to start seeing corn leaf diseases. While we will see corn leaf diseases almost every year, anymore, we still need to be cautious on if and when we initiate fungicide treatments. Common rust started showing up in Kansas corn last week. While it can be concerning, for the name if no other reason, common rust really doesn't need to be treated. Southern rust could start showing up sometime in the next 2 to 6 weeks and is probably the second most serious corn leaf disease. But if common rust is showing up then the next thing to expect is gray leaf spot which is generally the most damaging of all the corn leaf diseases. While there is some gray leaf spot resistance in some hybrids and there is a challenge in correlating gray leaf spot levels with yield. But some hybrids can tolerate higher levels of leaf spot without impacting yield. You do need to be out in your corn fields right now, as they tassel and check for gray leaf spot. If you can not find gray leaf spot in your corn at tasseling, it is unlikely that treatments will be economical. IF you have a highly susceptible hybrid and you have gray leaf spot lesions three leaves below the ear at or ahead of tasseling, you should consider spraying. If your hybrid is moderately susceptible then you would need to see gray leaf spot lesions on the 2nd leaf below the ear leaf before you spray. For highly resistant varieties, look for lesions on the leaf below the ear. If treatment is needed then best results are going to be achieved with applications just before or at silking. So let's get scouting! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.