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Crops & Soils/Horticulture

It's Crops Tour Time!!

This year's annual Meadowlark Extension District fall demonstration plot tour will be Tuesday, August 25th at Domann Farms, Winchester. We'll start off with coffee and a sponsored breakfast at 8:00 a.m. followed by the plot discussion at 8:30.

This year's corn demonstration plots continue row spacing work started last year. We'll share 2014 results from twenty inch versus thirty inch row spacing trails and present plot layouts from our second year of row spacing comparisons. We'll also discuss sensor readings from supplemental nitrogen plots at seven sites across the Meadowlark Extension District.

Soybean row spacing work was put on hold this year due to weather – shocking, right?! Instead, we'll take a look at the response of later planted soybeans to maturity group and population as this year's plot includes two maturity groups planted at two different populations. KSU Cropping Systems Specialist Dr. Ignacio Ciampitti will talk soybean growth and development and the yield factors associated with increasing soybean yield in addition to how soybeans respond when we plant outside of our 'typical' planting window.

RSVPs are not required, but are requested to get an accurate meal count. RSVP by Monday, August 24th to dhallaue@ksu.edu or by calling the Oskaloosa Office of the Meadowlark Extension District at (785) 863-2212. No RSVP – no problem! Come anyways!

A huge thank you goes out to this year's plot sponsors: Valley Ag of Valley Falls, Dailey Ag of Oskaloosa, J.B. Pearl Sales & Service at Perry, and Murrfield Farms Supply of McLouth. Thank you for your continued support!

A plot tour flyer and information is available under the Crops & Soils link at www.meadowlark.ksu.edu or by contacting a Meadowlark Extension District Office. Hope to see you there!

Tomatoes and Stinkbugs

I've heard enough 'horror' stories this summer about tomatoes that I almost hate to give you a heads up about what to check them for now!! Even so, stink bugs can definitely be a problem for tomato gardeners and deserve your attention.

If you haven't seen them before, stinkbugs are a shield-shaped insect that emit a foul odor when disturbed. They injure tomatoes when they use their mouthparts to probe through the fruit's skin. You'll notice their damage when you see golden-yellow, pink or white spots on the fruit as they ripen because color development is affected where probing occurs, resulting in the off color, cloudy spots. Heavy feeding damage causes spots to spread to the point that tomatoes may develop a golden color. If you look closely, you can see the pinprick-sized puncture wounds in the middle of the spots.

A hard, whitish, callous tissue develops beneath the skin at the area of wounding. Sadly, by the time you notice the spots, stinkbugs are often gone, so control is impossible. Affected tomatoes are safe to eat.