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Soybean Disease Management

Did you know: long-term estimates predict a 12.5 percent increase in soybean yields in Kansas if we could eliminate diseases? Did you know (part II!): approximately 25 diseases may occur in a given year - with a much smaller number causing the aforementioned losses?

Seed rots and seedling blights (Pythium, Rhizoctonia, and Fusarium predominantly) alone can reduce yields an average of 2.5 bushels per acre. Fortunately, our seed treatment programs effectively address most of them. Use two or more active ingredients when possible.

Two other important diseases, soybean cyst nematode (SCN) and soybean sudden death syndrome (SDS) are best managed at planting using resistant varieties. While they are two different diseases, you rarely see a field infected with SDS that does not already have SCN. In fact, a recent two-year survey indicated that approximately 20 percent of Kansas soybean fields may be infested with soybean cyst nematode. Because varietal resistance can be quite variable, growers should continuously monitor nematode levels in known infested fields to evaluate the varieties being grown. Test all fields every third soybean crop to confirm the nematode has not become established, or that it is being properly managed.

What about seed treatments? Research has actually been fairly positive for products to control sudden death syndrome. A 2015 study at the Kansas River Valley Experiment Field shows good results. Request a copy from your District Office or access it online at: https://webapp.agron.ksu.edu/agr_social/eu_article.throck?article_id=814 .

Grassy Weed in the Lawn? Think Orchardgrass!

Moisture plus cooler temperatures equals an explosion in turf grass growth! If dandelions are an indicator (they are!), weeds also like those conditions!

Broadleaf weed control makes sense to us. Grassy weeds are a little more difficult! One such grassy weed visible now is orchardgrass. As a cool season grass, it responds similarly to our fescue lawn to fertilizer, moisture, and moderate temperatures. Unfortunately, its lighter green color and rapid growth rate also make it very visible – and undesirable!

There are no herbicides that will kill the orchardgrass without also killing the turf and since it can come as a contaminant in other grass seed, our first line of defense is to make sure that we purchase good, clean grass seed. Try to buy grass seed that has 0.0% "other crop seed.

KSU Horticulture Specialist Dr. Ward Upham terms the postemergence control options as 'few and painful'! Use glyphosate to spot spray orchardgrass clumps, avoiding other lawn grasses that the herbicide will kill. When the spots have turned brown, cut out the clumps and replace with a small piece of sod. If orchardgrass is taking over, consider killing the entire lawn and starting over – in the fall! For more information on orchardgrass identification, check out: http://kswildflower.org/grass_details.php?grassID=15 .