

David G. Hallauer
Meadowlark Extension District Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

Soybean Disease Management - Know Your Variety!

Much of our soybean disease pressure is weather dependent. If it rains at the right time – or doesn't rain at the right time! – problems occur.

Two of our most significant soybean disease problems are certainly examples of that. Charcoal rot is our most significant Kansas soybean disease. It actually infects soybean roots early in the season even though it does not make itself known until the reproductive stages when hot, dry weather conditions activate the fungus that slowly kills the plant. Phytophthora root rot can be a problem with early season soaking rains. Both diseases definitely have a weather component to them, but varietal differences play a big role as well.

With that in mind, an understanding of what varietal resistance/tolerance/etc... the varieties you are planting have can help you understand early season stand issues or late season disease pressure. They can also help you plan ahead for scouting and potential fungicide treatments if conditions warrant and a variety has a particular susceptibility.

Seed company information is a great resource for those ratings. Contact your seed dealer for information or check out the limited ratings available from the Kansas Crop Performance Tests for soybean varieties available at: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/SRP1121.pdf> . Scouting is a must during the season, but a little homework ahead of time can help you make those scouting trips a little more efficient!

Powdery Mildew on Turf Grass

The weather has been perfect for powdery mildew – and it has returned to northeast Kansas!! Fortunately, as serious as it looks, it rarely causes lasting turf damage.

If you walk across your lawn and see individual grass blades that appear to have been dusted with flower, you need to do a little closer inspection! When you do, you'll likely find more of the powdery growth on the upper surface of the leaves. As the disease progresses, turf grass blades wither and die.

High relative humidity, poor air movement, and air temperatures around 65°F favor disease development. If you don't see it often, you can assume that unique weather conditions are the cause and it will improve over time without a need for treatment.

If this is a regular occurrence, other options need to be considered. Several fungicides, like triadimefon, propiconazole, and myclobutanil are effective in reducing the powdery mildew incidence, but they may not be long lived or economically sustainable. Improving light and air penetration is a key cultural control component to consider. If the area is often shady and moist, consider changes to shade or grass thickness to alleviate some of the problem. If the area is constantly a powdery mildew haven, it might be time to consider another groundcover!

Powdery mildew is seldom a long term issue in most of our lawns, so give it some time. Sooner than later, we'll be hot and dry and wishing that powdery mildew was a problem!