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Late Season Soybean Insect Pressure

A recent scouting exercise in the northern part of the District showed about what we expected: not much. Why? Insect pressure has been fairly low for most of the season, and insecticides applied over the last couple of weeks have further kept that pressure at bay.

Will the insecticides last the remainder of the season? I hope so. Most will last at least two weeks – maybe a little longer if sunlight doesn't break them down too quickly. Depending on application timing, that could get us down the road towards maturity, but it's still a good idea to be on the lookout for damaging pests.

Soybeans can typically withstand up to 20 percent foliage loss during pod formation and early fill. After beans are nearly filled, defoliation seldom causes a yield reduction.

Pod feeders are a different story. Stink bugs, bean leaf beetles, and soybean podworm (corn earworm) can cause significant damage to developing pods if insect pressure is high. Even with an insecticide applied, scouting is beneficial. New growth at the top of plants likely wasn't covered during application, plus insecticides do have a limited efficacy length.

What we did find was plenty of defoliation stem borer. There's nothing that can be done for this pest now (control with insecticides is difficult at best), except to plan harvest accordingly. Weakened stems from feeding can result in lodging made worse by windy conditions at maturity.

For descriptions of these pests, see the KSU Soybean Insect Management Guide available from a District Extension Office or online at <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf743.pdf>.

Bur Oak Issues

If you look very closely across our woodlands, it's not uncommon to see a 'bronzing' of some of our bur oaks. In some cases, the bronzing and even thinning of the canopy for this time of year is pretty noticeable.

In many cases, the damage is from multiple sources. Foresters have attributed some of the potential damage to spring cold snaps or even light herbicide injury that occurred earlier in the season. Some species have some disease pressure present as well.

Insect pressure has also been prevalent. Scale insects, lacebugs, and even caterpillars and galls have all been prevalent this summer.

What's the prognosis? It's pretty good, actually. Most of the internal branch tissue on evaluated trees was moist and pliable. Trees are healthy for the most part. We may lose some twigs or even branches, and trees certainly should be monitored in the future, but much of the damage will likely not be long-term in these stands.

If you are interested in seeing what some of the trees look like, check out our Meadowlark Extension District Facebook page for this week's video.