K·STATE Research and Extension | Meadowlark District

July 10, 2020

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

Fungicide Applications to Corn

With much of the corn crop tasseling, fungicide applications may be on your mind. Consider these points as you make your decision:

First, fungicide application research has shown that tassel/silk stage applications of fungicides are the most effective. Without disease pressure at those stages warranting an application, data does suggest later disease pressure can be economically addressed through R2 (approximately 12 days after silk when silks darken/dry out and kernels are white and blister-like in shape containing a clear fluid). R2 applications can provide protection later in to the grain fill period as well, since fungicide efficacy tends to wane three to four weeks post application.

Second, consider hybrid susceptibility. Susceptible hybrids growing in conditions favoring disease will likely respond well to a fungicide. A resistant hybrid in conditions not favorable to disease likely won't respond at all. Know your genetics.

Look at weather *and* disease forecast models. The trend thus far has been hot and dry. Check out weather models to see if that will continue. As a point of reference, southern corn rust has stayed predominantly in the southeast part of the country, but has been found as far north as central Arkansas as of early July (https://corn.ipmpipe.org/southerncornrust/ .

Disease scouting aids can be found in this recent KSU Agronomy eUpdate article: https://bit.ly/3dPIwjH . Post application scouting is valuable as well. Illinois corn fungicide trials suggest that a fungicide application would have been valuable if at least 5 percent of the ear leaf area is affected by disease at the end of the season.

Product selection is important to manage fungicide resistance. Check out our news articles page at https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/crops-soils/index.html for references.

Japanese Beetles

As reports increase of Japanese beetle infestations, it's time to scout. This voracious foliage feeder can do a lot of damage in little time – as they feed on over 300 species of plants.

Japanese beetles are just under a half inch long with copper colored wing covers on a metallic green body. A series of white tufts of hair project from under the wing covers on the back half of the insect. Feeding in large groups occurs over a four to six-week period starting at the top of the plant and moving downward.

Control methods are complicated by the beetle's tendency to drop to the ground when disturbed. When possible, adult beetles can be killed by shaking from small plants in to a bucket with soapy water. This is especially effective in the morning when the beetles are sluggish. Many common insecticides include labels for Japanese beetles, including cyfluthrin, bifenthrin, cyhalothrin, and carbaryl. Neem and Pyola products can also work short term. Avoid traps around the home. They tend to attract more beetles than they kill.