

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

### ***Pesticide Labels***

If you've ever read this column to the end, you may have noted this statement: always read and follow label directions. It's a reminder that anyone applying a pesticide has a responsibility to make sure they are doing so according to current label guidelines.

The importance of staying abreast of label rules and regulations can often be overlooked in our haste to get unwanted vegetation cleaned up or take care of the disease overtaking our tomatoes. Sifting through the label to find the correct rate or volume of water or appropriate carrier can be more time than we want to take. Still, the label is the law – and for good reason.

Inappropriate pesticide use has ramifications far beyond poor control of the pest in question. It can lead to diminished plant growth and production. Off label applications can result in products that are unusable according to the label, even as they look just fine.

The wrong rate at the wrong growth/life stage or using the old saying 'if a little is good, then a lot will be better' can result in weed, disease, and insect resistance that, while unintended, may reduce further the arsenal of products available for control.

With that in mind: always read and follow label directions. Whether you are using an insecticide for bagworms or spraying pigweeds in soybeans, the label is designed to protect the crop to which it is applied – and the applicator that applies it.

### ***Bagworms have Hatched***

The 2020 bagworm hatch has begun. If you are going to be implementing a control program, now is the time to get ready. Insecticides should be applied when bagworm larvae are an eighth to a quarter-inch long

Eggs will be hatching over several weeks. With last year's high numbers, it is likely that repeat applications will be necessary. To determine if additional insecticide applications are needed, check plants for live bags that look like small cones, about the size of a pencil lead.

Many insecticide products are effective on bagworms. Read the label and look for bagworms under pests controlled, and then the species you are spraying to make sure it is safe. Thorough coverage of plant foliage increases effectiveness. That means timing sprays for application in the morning or evening when larvae are most active. It also means spraying ample volumes with good coverage of the tree from top to bottom and from the outer branches to inner branches as well. Once bagworms reach an inch or greater in length, thick bags won't be penetrated by the insecticide, and their feeding declines, further reducing pesticide exposure.

For a list of products, feel free to contact your local Meadowlark Extension District office or e-mail me at [dhallaue@ksu.edu](mailto:dhallaue@ksu.edu) .