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Soybean Seed Treatments

According to the 2021 edition of *Kansas Soybean Management*, seed rots/seedling blights during planting/early emergence result in average soybean yield losses of two and a half bushels per acre. Pythium, Rhizoctonia, and Fusarium are the primary culprits. Technological advances in seed treatments have allowed us to ‘stay ahead’ of many of these diseases, but they aren’t 100 percent effective. An understanding of what seed treatment you actually have is important.

For example, metalaxyl and mefenoxam seed treatments have activity against Pythium and Phytophthora, but not Fusarium or Rhizoctonia. Even within a disease species, seed treatment efficacy can differ. Rate can be important, too. For example, fields with a history of Phytophthora may require higher rates of seed treatment to be effective.

Weather has huge influences on how well seeds emerge, but they affect seed treatment efficacy as well. Seed treatments typically provide some level of protection against disease for approximately three weeks after planting. If disease pressure occurs after that window, seed treatments will likely not reduce damage like they would have earlier in the window.

All these factors underscore the need for an understanding of seed treatments combined with a good scouting program after planting to help better manage soybean seedling diseases. For an overview of our four most common soybean diseases, check out the Crop Protection Network: <https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/resources/publications/seedling-diseases>. With any luck, it will help reduce that two-and-a-half-bushel loss to something much less.

Fall Lawn Weed Control

Spring is here. Lawns are growing, and weeds like henbit and chickweed are doing everything in their power to make their presence known. Unfortunately, efforts to ‘control’ them right now are usually more out of revenge than effectiveness.

If henbit or chickweed, or even dandelions, are an issue in your home lawn, you can sure do some spot treating now, but broad-spectrum control efforts may not yield the results you were hoping for. Plants may be burned back, but henbit and chickweed, in particular, are rarely killed.

Spot treat as needed, but make sure to mark your calendar for October applications as well. During that time, many of our common turf grass herbicides for broadleaf weeds are very effective (henbit and chickweed are winter annuals and have started their *next* growing season by this time). It won’t mean you won’t have weeds (some spring follow-up *will* be necessary), but it will provide you a much better opportunity to make spring control more effective.

For more information on specific products to apply in the fall, contact any of our District Extension Offices or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu.