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Alfalfa Weevil Emergence – It Won't Be Long

According to the Alfalfa Weevil Growing Degree Day (GDD) Calculator on the Kansas Mesonet (<https://mesonet.k-state.edu/agriculture/degreedays/>) weevil scouting should start when we reach the 150-180 GDD mark. We're a little ways from that yet. Mesonet sites across NEK currently show GDDs ranging from the mid-70s to close to 90 (close to 70 GDDs ahead of normal for this time of year). With increasing temperatures forecast, however, and knowing eggs can hatch as early as 25 GDDs, it wouldn't be surprising to note some hatching already, with noticeable feeding injury soon to follow.

Alfalfa weevils like cool weather, maybe even more than alfalfa itself. Larvae actively feed anytime temperatures reach the 45-degree F mark, so even when alfalfa growth is slowed by cooler temperatures, alfalfa weevils may still be causing injury. Damage is minimal at first - pin prick sized holes that don't look too bad. As larvae grows and the feeding rate increases, greater defoliation occurs, particularly with delayed plant growth. Feeding can occur for two to three weeks depending on when eggs were laid and how quickly temperatures increase.

Begin scouting early to stay ahead of weevil numbers and allow for sound evaluations about whether treatments are needed and when to do so. The annual scouting of selected Meadowlark Extension District fields will begin in mid-March. If you are interested in regular weevil number updates, contact me at a District Office or e-mail dhallaue@ksu.edu or sign up at: <https://forms.office.com/r/FwZbEsxedL>. Updates will also be posted here as weevil levels reach potential treatment thresholds.