

June 12, 2026

David Hallauer
District Extension Agent, Crops & Soils

Planning for Corn Diseases

Corn at the V10 growth stage is adding a new leaf every two to three days. At V14, we're two weeks from flowering. It's that time of year when we feel like we can almost see the corn growing throughout the day – increasing the need for focus on our disease management program.

Scouting should be step one. While the disease pyramid is the same for all diseases (host plus pathogen plus environment), the environmental piece of the equation is quite different for each pathogen. Scouting helps us determine which pathogen is an issue when. If some guidance would be helpful, the *Crop Protection Network* has numerous resources about individual diseases and now includes a disease lookout tool: <https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/crop-lookout> that allows you to select a disease of concern and see what findings of that disease reports have been confirmed across the country. It's not a substitute for individual field scouting but *can* help provide a heads up about what might be on the horizon.

When a fungicide is needed, product selection is important as we try to balance efficacy and economics. Fungicide selector information also on the *Crop Protection Network* includes ratings and recommendations from trials conducted across the corn growing region of the country. Check out a list of links to those tools on our Meadowlark Extension District Agronomy Blog at <https://blogs.k-state.edu/meadowlarkagronomy/> or reach out and we can discuss further.

Stay vigilant. Last year, early Tar Spot finds didn't develop as quickly or as severely as they have in the past. Southern Rust on the other hand, reared its ugly head quickly and with vengeance, causing losses after some early fungicide applications had waned in effectiveness. Scouting, disease knowledge, and appropriate fungicide use are all important parts of a sound corn disease management program. These *Crop Protection Network* tools can be a great help.