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Staying Ahead of Tar Spot

The confirmation of Tar Spot in NE Kansas late last week is a not-so-subtle reminder of the importance of scouting. Levels were still low but just finding it should encourage vigilance as the season progresses. How important is it to stay ahead of Tar Spot? Consider this statement from Purdue Extension Plant Pathologist Dr. Darcy Telenko: 'Early detection is critical. Once disease severity reaches five (5) percent or greater in the upper canopy, fungicides are unlikely to effectively slow disease progression.' What does that mean? Stay on top of it and have a plan you can implement should you confirm the disease.

Learn about the confirmation and next steps in the *KSU Agronomy eUpdate*:
<https://www.agronomy.k-state.edu/eupdates/2026/issue-1108-june-18/first-tar-spot-2026.html> or contact me for details. K-State Extension Row Crops Pathologist Dr. Rodrigo Onofre will be part of a disease 'scouting tour' of the Meadowlark Extension District on Tuesday June 30th with Tar Spot on the agenda. Get tour details including where to receive reports from the tour in our Agronomy blog: <https://blogs.k-state.edu/meadowlarkagronomy/>.

Corn Disease 'Did You Know'?

Not all corn diseases are the same, and it can be tough to know what's coming next. For a 'rough guide', consider these temperature/moisture factors for our most common diseases;

- Gray Leaf Spot: favored by rainy and/or humid weather
- Southern Rust: favored by warm days and nights (above 80 degrees) and high humidity
- Tar spot: temperatures of 60 to 75, 75 percent plus humidity, and wet leaves for seven hours or more