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No news today

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Soybean Emergence Issues – Disease Concerns

If my ‘windshield survey’ is accurate, soybean planting in the Meadowlark Extension District has reached the fifty percent range. With any luck, emergence will quickly follow.

When emergence isn’t quite what we’d hoped for, we often look for diseases. While disease is just one of many issues (crusting, compaction, and flooding all rivaled seedling diseases as the top causes of stand establishment problems in a 2012 certified crop adviser survey), it definitely has to be considered when a stand isn’t up to par.

In Kansas, we typically deal with four different seedling diseases: Pythium, Phytophthora, Fusarium, and Rhizoctonia. Pythium and Phytophthora like flooded soils, with Pythium favoring cool soils and Phytophthora warmer. Kansas Mesonet soil temperatures across northeast Kansas for the week ending May 15th were sitting in the upper 50’s with rain forecast for most of next week. As these temperatures warm, Rhizoctonia will have to be added to the list of diseases considered, and Fusarium seems to be a possibility in a broad range of soil temperature/moisture combinations.

Bottom line: be ready to scout soybean stands for stand loss. Don’t depend fully on seed treatments to carry the load, either. Seed treatment active ingredients differ in what they will guard against as well as the treatment level needed in high disease situations. Seed treatments don’t last forever, with most protecting the seed/seedling for approximately three weeks after planting (depending on product/disease).

For a primer on seedling diseases, check out this resource available from the Crop Protection Network: <https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/resources/publications/seedling-diseases> .

Rabbits in the Garden

Lots of folks enjoy the wildlife around them – until they start feeding in the garden. One early season wildlife ‘pest’ we have every year is rabbits. Fortunately, there are some management actions you can take to reduce the damage they cause.

First, understand what they like. While they feed on lots of young vegetables and flowers, some, like potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, and cucumbers are rarely bothered. That doesn’t mean other things won’t get them, but it may not be rabbits.

Second, when planning protection, put your efforts in to barriers that will provide the best effectiveness. Fencing can be quick and effective, but it needs to be at least two feet tall with one inch or less holes. If fencing isn’t something you want to mess with, consider a floating row cover. They can help keep rabbits away while also keeping plants warm in cool weather.

Repellants are available, but are short lived and require frequent reapplication – if they are even labeled for garden crops (*always* read and follow label directions). Live traps can work if you’re willing to relocate caught rabbits – and you can get them to take your bait with easier food sources often available. You might even consider a motion-activated sprinkler that releases a short burst of water when motion is detected. Some will protect up to 1000 square feet. Shooting is another possibility but only when it is safe and legal to do so.

For additional information on rabbits in the garden – and beyond – check out this publication (or request a copy from a District Office) from our KSU Wildlife Damage Control Series: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/1858.pdf> .

Cindy Williams
Meadowlark Extension District
Food, Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Watermelon: A Refreshing Favorite

Watermelon is an American summertime favorite. Throughout the summer months, many cannot get enough of this sweet treat. There are more than 1,200 different varieties of watermelons. Watermelon provides a refreshing way to help us reach the MyPlate recommendation of 1-2 cups from the fruit group each day. One cup of watermelon is equal to 1 small slice (1-inch thick) or 1 cup diced. Watermelon is naturally low in fat, sodium and has no cholesterol. It provides a source of potassium, vitamin C, vitamin A and folic acid. Some interesting facts about watermelon:

- *A watermelon is 100% usable and compostable (70% flesh and 30% rind).
- *Watermelon live up to their name as they are 92% water.
- *The rind of a watermelon is edible and can be used in stir-fries or salads.
- *Hollow out the watermelon to make a compostable bowl for your delicious treat such as a fruit salad or fruity dessert.

Selecting the perfect watermelon---Choose a firm, symmetrical, fruit that is free of cracks, bruises, soft spots or mold. A ripe watermelon will have a dull sheen, dried stem, and a buttery yellow underside where it has touched the ground. Thump your watermelon, as it should sound dull and hollow. Lift them as well, they should be heavy for their size.

Storing your watermelon---An uncut watermelon can be kept for up to 2 weeks at room temperature. When ready to use, scrub with a clean vegetable brush under running water. Dry with a clean towel or paper towel. Once cut, store watermelon in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days without a decrease in flavor or texture.

Nancy Nelson
Meadowlark Extension District
Family Life

Exercise and Diabetes

Experts agree that walking is one of the best exercises for people with diabetes. It is relaxing, easy, can be done almost anywhere, and is highly effective at controlling blood glucose levels.

If you have diabetes, there are important things to consider before you start. In addition to general physical activity recommendations, here are specific considerations.

Get approval from your healthcare provider for any new exercise program. They can also point out special precautions you should take based on the type of diabetes you have.

Wear the right shoes. Foot health is extra important for anyone with diabetes. It can be hard to detect blisters, abrasion, and skin breaks because foot numbness is a symptom of diabetes. Shoes should fit comfortably, have plenty of room in the toe area, and should not rub at the heel.

Socks are important, too. Avoid cotton socks that bunch up and retain moisture. Choose socks that wick away sweat and prevent blisters.

Be prepared. Wear a diabetes ID bracelet or something to alert others that you have diabetes. Carry glucose pills or an appropriate snack in case your blood sugar drops.

Ask your doctor when you should check blood glucose levels related to exercise (before, during, or after). Be aware that insulin requirements will change with exercise. Do a foot check after each walking session.