

August 28, 2026

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Seed Treatments: Resistance – or Just a Bad Year?

There have been two main soybean diseases of note this year: Phytophthora root rot was commonplace through our KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab in mid-summer while Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) has really started to show up now. If you had a seed treatment applied for either of those diseases – and still had issues – you might be asking why.

While product resistance is often raised as an obvious culprit, other factors contribute to disease presence as well. Environment is the big one. We know that a seed planted into some conditions will struggle more than one planted in 'better' conditions. For Phytophthora, for example, warm, saturated soil, especially shortly after planting, is conducive to root infections that eventually result in destruction of roots and stems. Sudden Death also likes wet soils, but maybe slightly cooler temperatures. How long suitable conditions last can be a factor as well.

Variety tolerance is another factor. Finding the perfect soybean variety with the perfect disease package is impossible but finding one that checks as many boxes as you can, particularly on troublesome acres, can be an important management tool. Complete resistance isn't possible, but at least *some* level of resistance could make significant yield differences.

While resistance *is* possible, disease control failure is more likely due to seed treatment misapplication or choosing a less than effective seed treatment than it is resistance. Examples of pathogen resistance to seed treatment fungicides has thus far been rare and localized. A 2024 published study found that two of our common SDS treatments (fluopyram – ILEVO and pydiflumetofen – SALTRO) are still showing similar effectiveness against SDS as they were in similar studies over a decade ago. In other words, be vigilant when it comes to monitoring for resistance to seed treatments (and if you think you might have it we can sure discuss further...), but other factors are likely at play as well.

The next few months are going to give us a great opportunity to evaluate the efficacy of our planting time seed treatment decisions. While the crop is still green, it's a great time to get a visual appraiser and as we move to harvest, yield will tell the tale. Using those observations plus varietal information, planting dates, growing conditions, and seed treatments can help us take even bigger steps towards better management next year. No single strategy will completely manage a particular seedling disease and gathering all the information we can now is a huge step towards developing an effective and integrated approach to seedling disease management.

August 28, 2026

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Weaning Checklist

Late summer and early fall can be a busy time on the ranch, particularly with those who have multiple calving groups. Summer calving is wrapping up with breeding occurring, fall calving is getting underway and weaning of the spring calving herd will be happening soon. Research has proven that low stress cattle handling and proper vaccination helps calves perform later as stockers and/or in the feedyard. Following a checklist for successful weaning can help to make the process as low stress and profitable as possible. For additional information Oklahoma State University has an excellent newer fact sheet on this topic titled [*"Calf Preconditioning: A Comprehensive Overview" AFS-3039*](#).

There are specialty marketing programs that have specific calf management requirements, but in general calves need to be castrated, dehorned, have been administered basic pre-conditioning vaccines, be bunk broke and weaned a minimum number of days – typically 45. Traceability to the ranch of origin, more natural management practices and explicit breed makeups, can all add value to specific programs.

Most vaccination schedules include two rounds of a Clostridial vaccine (Blackleg), two rounds of a 5-way Respiratory vaccine (BRD), and 1 round of a Mannheimia haemolytica and/or Pasteurella vaccine (Shipping Fever). All vaccines should be given according to label instructions. Use caution with modified live products on suckling calves, if dams are unvaccinated or of unknown vaccination status, as abortion can be a possible side effect. Internal and external parasite control is another consideration, if warranted, at weaning time. Always work with your herd health veterinarian for a plan targeted to your herd and situation.

The weaning environment makes a big difference in the health status of calves. Initially putting calves in a familiar pen or trap with some shade will help smooth the weaning transition. Ensure that newly weaned calves are not put into a hot, dusty dry lot and always have plenty of water accessible. Weaning in an environment as close to possible as what the calves have been raised on has real health and animal comfort benefits.

Weaning nutrition is one of the most important factors to pay attention to. Provide calves with palatable, familiar feeds with a greater concentration of nutrition to compensate for low intake. Some may choose to supplement protein on a forage-based diet, others choose total mixed rations. No matter what the approach, feeds and forages for newly weaned calves should be highly palatable. Start calves on a ration at 1% of body weight and increase slowly over several weeks.

All the prior discussion can have direct impact on profitability of the operation, but protecting against death loss and market volatility is a weaning time consideration for profitability as well. In some situations, it might make sense to market early following the weaning period. Other times it might make more sense to background calves to a later end point for various reasons, including feed availability and tax management. In either case, consider Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) to guarantee a calf value that preserves operational profit.

August 28, 2026

Laura Phillips
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No article this week.

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Your Brain, Your Health, Your Voice

When you visit the doctor, certain things are routine. Your blood pressure is checked, your weight is recorded, and blood tests may be ordered to monitor cholesterol, glucose levels, and other health indicators. But how often do you talk with your doctor about your brain health? If we advocate for our heart health and physical well-being, shouldn't we also advocate for our brain health?

As people age, many worry about cognitive changes that could indicate dementia. It is a difficult and often frightening topic to discuss. However, just as we monitor other aspects of our health, we should also pay attention to our cognitive health and speak up when concerns arise.

The good news is that most people experience only normal age-related memory changes. These changes are often subtle and may include slower processing speed or taking longer to recall information. They generally do not interfere with daily activities. However, some changes may signal a more serious concern. Examples include forgetting information soon after hearing it, becoming disoriented in familiar places, or having increasing difficulty managing everyday tasks.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, "Dementia is a general term for loss of memory, language, problem-solving, and other thinking abilities that are severe enough to interfere with daily life." Talking with your primary care provider sooner rather than later can help identify concerns and rule out other conditions that may affect memory or thinking abilities.

In some cases, memory and cognitive problems may be reversible. Certain medications, illnesses such as urinary tract infections, stress, depression, sleep problems, and other health conditions can affect memory and thinking. Identifying and treating these issues may improve cognitive functioning.

If you notice changes in your memory, it is important to discuss them with your doctor. One of the biggest barriers to seeking help is fear. Some people worry they may receive a diagnosis they are not ready to hear. However, if symptoms warrant further evaluation, it is better to know sooner rather than later. An accurate diagnosis allows individuals and families to plan ahead and explore available treatment options. While there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, treatments and interventions may help manage symptoms and improve quality of life.

Taking charge of your brain health also means being proactive about reducing your risk of cognitive decline. Consider these strategies for maintaining a healthy brain:

- **Protect your head.** Help prevent head injuries by wearing a helmet when biking or participating in sports and by taking steps to reduce your risk of falls.
- **Don't smoke.** Avoiding tobacco use or quitting smoking may help lower your risk of cognitive decline.
- **Stay physically active.** Participate in activities that increase your heart rate, such as walking, swimming, jogging, or other forms of aerobic exercise.
- **Challenge your mind.** Learn a new skill, take up a hobby, or try new activities that stimulate your brain.
- **Control your blood pressure.** Practice healthy habits such as eating nutritious foods, staying active, and taking prescribed medications.
- **Manage diabetes.** If you have Type 2 diabetes, work with your healthcare provider to manage your condition through healthy eating, physical activity, and medication when needed.

August 28, 2026

- **Get quality sleep.** Aim for consistent, restful sleep each night.
- **Keep learning.** Education and lifelong learning have been linked to better cognitive health and a lower risk of dementia.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats can support brain health.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Talk with your healthcare provider about healthy weight goals and strategies to achieve them.

Your brain influences every aspect of your life. Don't be afraid to talk with your doctor about concerns related to memory or cognitive health. Trust yourself, ask questions, and be an advocate for your health. Your brain is worth it.

August 28, 2026

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No article this week.