Wheat is in flag leaf stage and boot stage in southwest Missouri

Jill Scheidt, agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension, scouted fields west of Liberal on April 29.

“Wheat is in the flag leaf stage and some wheat is in the boot stage. The flag leaf is important to protect from disease and other pests because it accounts for 75 percent of the grain fill,” said Scheidt.

The beginning stages of powdery mildew are starting to show up in thick wheat fields due to prolonged moisture on leaves during cloudy periods. “A small amount of stripe rust was seen just north of Diamond. There have also been reports of common and stripe rust in southern Missouri,” said Scheidt. To protect against powdery mildew, rust, and other common diseases, use a fungicide like Caramba or Headline. Please refer to the 2015 MU Pest Management Guide for rates.

Wheat spindle streak mosaic virus is showing up in many wheat fields around Missouri and eastern counties in Kansas. Spindle streak mosaic is identified by stunted areas in fields where leaves are a mottled yellow or light green color. “The presence of the disease is more prevalent in wet falls shortly after planting or wet conditions in late winter-early spring. There is no fungicide available because wheat spindle streak mosaic is a virus,” said Scheidt. Resistant varieties, not planting too early in the fall and controlling volunteer wheat are management practices to protect against the occurrence of viruses.

Thirty-three true armyworm moths were caught in pheromone traps 4 miles east of Lamar within six days. Threshold levels to cause pest concern are if 25 moths are caught within one night, so moths are not at threshold levels, but armyworms should be scouted for in the next few weeks. “Nitrogen burn was seen on wheat, once the flag leaf is present, nitrogen should not be applied to protect the flag leaf from damage,” said Scheidt.

Corn is just emerging or in the two leaf stage. Potentially high numbers of black cutworm moths were caught in Southeast Missouri. This does not mean black cutworms should be treated for, it means that fields should be scouted for black cutworms as cool, wet springs increase the threat of black cutworm in corn fields. Black cutworms should be scouted for until the 5-leaf stage. Frost damage was seen on tips of young corn, but it is small enough that it should pull out of it.

More Information
The weekly field scouting report is sponsored by University of Missouri and Barton County Extension. For more information on the scouting report, or to learn how to receive the information earlier by telephone, contact the Barton County Extension Center at (417) 682-3579.