Plant cover crops and scout for Podworms in soybeans

Jill Scheidt, agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension, scouted fields near Arcola in Dade County and south of Lamar in Barton County on Aug. 12.

Corn Report
Scheidt observed corn in the dent stage and various milk line stages. “Once corn reaches black layer, or physiological maturity, irrigation can be turned off,” said Scheidt.

According to Mississippi State University Extension, potential kernel weight is only about 75 percent complete at the dent stage; irrigation is still needed at this stage to fill kernels.

“Black layer is when corn has reached physiological maturity, about twenty days after the dent stage. Black layer can be identified by breaking the ear in half and looking for the milk-line, a dark yellow line that gradually forms closer and closer to the cob,” said Scheidt.

Soybean Report
Scheidt observed soybeans in the 4th trifoliate to beginning pod set stages. Scheidt observed one cloverworm per foot of row. “Cloverworm feed on foliage and generally do not require treatment,” said Scheidt.

Scout for soybean podworms when soybeans begin the flowering stage. Threshold for podworm in soybean is one per foot or when five percent or more pods are damaged.

“To distinguish between cloverworm and soybean podworm, look for the number of prolegs on the worm, which are located at the center of the body. Cloverworms have 3 prolegs and podworms have 4 prolegs,” said Scheidt.

Cover Crops
Scheidt recommends purchasing and planting cover crops now to Mid-August to lower weed pressure and soil erosion. “Turnips, radish or a legume are good choices for ground currently planted to crops. Use volunteer wheat or one of the previous cover crops for cover on fallow ground,” said Scheidt.

Weeds should be controlled in fallow fields in order to prevent seed production. “Weeds should be controlled by tillage, cover crops or the use of a herbicide. If using a herbicide read the label carefully and be aware of carryover and crop rotation restrictions,” said Scheidt.

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.