Preventative Fungicide Application in Wheat for Head Scab

Jill Scheidt, agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension, scouted wheat and corn along the Barton and Jasper County line and north of Arcola on April 27.

Scheidt scouted wheat in the heading to beginning flowering stages.

She observed barley yellow dwarf virus, vectored by aphids, on leaves. It can be identified by a mottled red or purple color starting on the tip of the flag leaf.

“The only treatment is to treat aphids when at threshold levels,” said Scheidt. “I also observed smut, identified by black, powdery masses on the head, in one field.”

Smut is a soil-borne disease with no rescue treatment options, plant disease-free seed or use a systemic seed treatment to protect against it.

“The weather conditions are currently ideal for fusarium head scab development in wheat because temperature range is 77-86 degrees and humid or wet. A preventative fungicide should be applied during the flowering stage only; Prosaro and Caramba are labeled for head scab suppression, read the label for application timing during early or mid-flowering for best results. Both Prosaro and Caramba protect against foliar disease on the flag leaf too,” said Scheidt.

Scheidt observed clipped wheat heads in many fields. This was a result of rodents and not armyworm.

“Rodents clip stems, pile them and droppings can be seen nearby. Armyworms clip heads and feed on leaves,” said Scheidt.

Scheidt observed corn in the emerging to 4 leaf stages.

“Cutworm and bird feeding was seen in emerging corn. Look for clipped corn plants and small holes nearby, dig to find black cutworm in the soil. Scout up to the 4 leaf stage,” said Scheidt. Rescue treatments, such as Hero or Warrior II, are suggested when 2 to 4 percent of the corn seedlings are cut below ground, and 6 to 8 percent are fed upon or cut above ground.

“Small water hemp and marestail were seen in corn fields and should be treated when 2-4” in height or diameter for best control,” 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.