

3/28/16

Crop Update

### **Alfalfa Weevil Management**

Alfalfa weevils lay eggs in fall, winter and spring. Larvae grow through four stages (instars). After egg hatch, early instar larvae move up alfalfa stems to feed inside the plant terminal. Third and fourth instar stages feed on foliage outside terminal, with a large amount of foliage possibly consumed leaving a skeletonized stem.

After 200 degree days (base 48) have accumulated begin scouting. With the warmer weather, larvae feeding activity has been seen in the area. Scouting with a sweep net will help identify presence of larvae, however, the most effective technique is to collect ten alfalfa stems in five locations in the field and tap them into a white bucket. Handle stems carefully when clipping so larvae do not fall to the ground. The economic threshold is an average of one or more larvae per stem and 30% terminal feeding damage.

Early harvest is an option for management, however it is best for the crop to not harvest earlier than 10 days prior to normal growth stage of 1/10<sup>th</sup> bloom. Harvest could be done by cutting for hay or grazing. University of Missouri research found that 98% of weevils can be reduced with mechanical harvest and a 90% reduction by grazing. If grazing, be cautious of bloat and damage to the alfalfa crowns from trampling during wet conditions.

If insecticide treatment is warranted there are numerous registered products in Missouri. For good coverage, it is best to use 20 gallons per acre for ground spray rigs. Be sure to read all label restrictions and preharvest intervals. There have been reported control failures with standard treatments of chlorpyrifos products and pyrethroid products that have been attributed to cool weather. Indoxacarb (Steward) has had good activity where the standard pyrethroid and chlorpyrifos products failed.

For more information contact University of Missouri Extension. You can find more information on alfalfa weevil management at the University of Missouri Extension website:

<http://extension.missouri.edu/capegirardeau/agriculture.aspx>

### **Cover Crop Management**

If you have some questions about cover crop termination, there are a couple of links to consider reviewing:

- 1) University of Missouri, Kevin Bradley's cover crop research:  
<http://weeds.cscience.missouri.edu/extension/pdf/Bradley%20-%20cover%20crops%202014.pdf>
- 2) University of Tennessee, Garret Montgomery's cover crop research:  
[http://news.utcropl.com/2016/03/terminate-cover-crop/?utm\\_source=Tennessee&utm\\_campaign=668142d35a-](http://news.utcropl.com/2016/03/terminate-cover-crop/?utm_source=Tennessee&utm_campaign=668142d35a-)

[UTcrops News Updates&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0 1708063e0d-668142d35a-173413945](https://www.uctcrops.com/news/updates/?utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1708063e0d-668142d35a-173413945)

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