

Reports coming in from the crop tour indicate that yield expectations are good for the 2009 crop. In Missouri, we have had plenty of moisture and fairly good growing conditions across most of the state. The crop is behind in its development, but has good yield potential.

With the weather conditions we have had, corn foliage diseases could be expected to be widespread and severe. In corn, gray leaf spot occurred early in the season and lower in the canopy than normal. In some fields, the disease didn't move up in the canopy and in a few, the disease did continue to move up in the canopy and fungicide treatment may have been warranted. Common rust is present in low levels but does not seem to be increasing. Southern rust has moved into the state over the last few weeks and in some fields is building up to potentially damaging levels. Disease incidence, stage of growth of the crop, days prior to harvest, and weather forecast should be taken into consideration before deciding to use a foliar fungicide.

Soybean diseases are present, but no reports of serious problems have occurred yet. A few of the fungal diseases such as Septoria brown spot and frogeye leaf spot have been found, but are not considered serious at this time. Symptoms of sudden death syndrome started appearing in early August but have been slow to develop. Symptoms may become more evident during the next few weeks.

Initial reports from both from the Missouri Seed improvement Association and the Missouri Department of Agriculture indicate poor germination results on wheat from this year's crop. Samples with germination rates of 50-60% and visibly infected seeds are common. If seed from this year's crop is being saved to plant this fall, careful attention needs to be paid to your seed quality. There were definite problems with scab in the 2009 wheat crop. Reports indicate that wheat grown in central Missouri seemed to have fewer problems than wheat in other areas of the state. Fusarium head blight (scab) can infect kernels and can affect stands. The fungus can also cause a seedling blight of wheat. Management of Fusarium seedling blight is through the planting of disease-free seed or a combination of thoroughly cleaning the seed lot, having a germination test, adjusting the seeding rate to compensate for germination rate and using a fungicide seed treatment effective against seed-borne Fusarium or scab.

Germination tests can be completed at home or by sending a sample to the Missouri Seed Improvement Association or the Missouri Department of Agriculture. It is important to clean the sample before doing the germination sample. Cleanout in some seed lots may be as high as 25-30%. Your sample needs to represent what will be planted and not what is in storage.