

Scout for Crop Insect Pests in Early Spring

The first pest to show this spring will be alfalfa weevil. Growers should watch carefully alfalfa fields as weevil will climb to the tops of plants and skeletonize leaflets.

Next, cornfields should be carefully scouted for Black cutworm. The Extension service uses traps to calculate a date which cutting will start and begin to scout at those dates.

Limited corn acres are damaged by black cutworm each year, but when cutting occurs, it may be severe enough that the field may need to be replanted if control was not applied. Be sure to scout fields if a transgenic event had not been used to control black cutworm. If black cutworm is found, control decision should be based on economic thresholds.

The increased use of small grain cover crops may increase the risk of armyworm injuring corn. Armyworm is attracted to small grains and can move into grass plants such as corn. In past years, I have witnessed armyworm may feeding on pastures. Be sure to scout cover crop small grain fields being planted to corn.

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