

From: Dwayne Dabbs, Field Crops Agent

**FIELD CROPS Newsletter
March, 2017**

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Small Grains

I thought last year was bad for small grains, but it seems that Mother Nature wants to prove me wrong. I wish I could give you a blanket recommendation on the small grains this year, but it has been a case by case situation is so different that doing that would be next to impossible. I am sure that most of you have put your topdressing out and have sprayed for any weeds that are there, but we are far from being out of the woods yet. Dr. Post, has put together some information about scouting for freeze injury and it will help you decide whether you should push your small grains for harvesting or whether you may need to consider taking the mower out and baling it for hay. You can find that information at: <https://smallgrains.ces.ncsu.edu/2017/03/freeze-warning-in-nc-are-your-varieties-at-risk/>

Scouting for Cereal Leaf Beetles

"Using the cereal leaf beetle degree day model, we should be hitting peak egg lay for this insect soon.

How many insects are there?

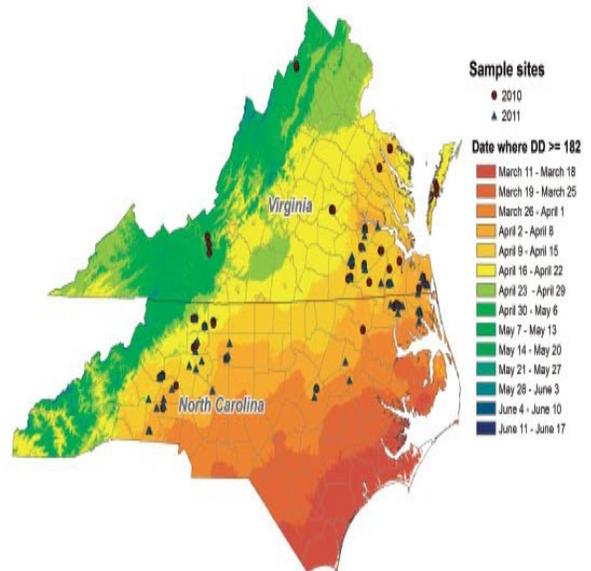
The established threshold is one larva or egg per four tillers, with more larvae than eggs present to justify a spray. Note that scouting should be done away from the field edge, since they tend to clump in fields and near edges. Dirty pant legs and windshield scouting will not work for this insect. Your eye tends to be drawn to damage; when you pull random tillers, rather than scanning the field, there are fewer insects than you think. Since we are in the April 2 through the 15, it's probably time to start looking. If you don't see larvae in a few weeks, you probably won't have any beetles.

Did you spray an insecticide already?

If you sprayed an insecticide a month ago, consider it gone. Residual from pyrethroids for cereal leaf beetle is phenomenal. However, at its best, it will only last a month.

Stage of the wheat

Wheat is most sensitive to cereal leaf beetle at flag leaf emergence, followed by the boot stage. Wheat is much less sensitive to cereal leaf beetle after heading, with only small yield reductions caused by cereal leaf beetle during grain fill. So consider wheat planted in October to be safer from loss than wheat planted in November. There is a lot of good information to be found on the Small Grains Portal, and this information is updated as we face new problems going through the year, you can find that at: <https://smallgrains.ces.ncsu.edu/>



Average week when cereal leaf beetle reaches peak egg lay in North Carolina and Virginia. Data are based on thirty year averages and the degree day model tested by Philips et al. 2012

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Corn and Soybeans

The Official Variety Trials are available for corn, soybeans, and small grains at www.ncovt.com to help you make an informed decision on your seed purchases. Since the grain prices are so low, I would strongly look at your program and see what works and what does not so that you can maintain or improve your profit margin going forward. While I cannot tell you that one product is going to cure everything and boost your yields, if you want to try a product look at it on a small scale before you put it on all your acreage.

As a follow up to my last newsletter, the 2,4-D and Dicamba Tolerant Soybeans are available for this year. If you are planting soybeans with this technology near susceptible crops such as tobacco, soybeans or vegetables, there is a risk of drift, and these crops are very sensitive to these herbicides. To be safe I would say that the best way to solve the problem is get it before it starts. This means have a conversation with your neighbors if you know that your rotation will put soybeans close to tobacco or non-tolerant crops. I am by no means trying to get anything started, but there is a possibility of drift damage with these types of products, and the best way to mitigate this is to have the conversation now, and find out what your neighbors plans are so each of you can make adjustments, if they need to be made.



Certified Safe Farms

I have talked to several farmers about doing the Certified Safe Farm Program, and I still welcome you to participate if you would be willing to do so. We will have until the end of August to do the review the way the it is set up now. The cost share and program is still set up the same. A person from the University will come with me and look at your farm, talk about any hazards that we see, and how you may can go about fixing or improving it. Once you go through the program, you get up to a \$500.00 cost share that can used to buy Slow Moving Vehicle signs to Fire Extinguishers- the list is very extensive. I know that some are reluctant to take time out of your busy schedules and I can understand that. In the one farmer's case, it only took about 3 hours to look over all his equipment and greenhouses. It is not as painful as you may think. I know that things will be ramping up for all of you so just give me a call if you are interested in participating or have any questions about the process. There is usually a quick turnaround time of when you call and we can do the review.

Upcoming Field Trials

I have talked to several of you about different trials that you would like to see done on various products and varieties, and I welcome any input that you have and what you want to see. I just ask that you give me enough heads up notice so that I can work on getting everything in order to do the trial. I am hoping that there will be several trials in Alamance this year, and I will be sending you more information on the locations as well and what each trial will consist of.

Due to budget cuts, we will send our newsletters via email. I will not bombard your email with emails that are not relevant, but any pertinent information that I think needs to be brought to your attention. It is quite a bit quicker to press send than to send a paper copy. If this is something that you would be interested in helping us with, please send me an email to dcdabbs@ncsu.edu, with your name and which mail lists you are interested in (Field Crops, Corn, Small Grains, Tobacco, Soybeans) or if you think there is a list that I need to add. If you would like to be taken off this mailing list let me know, either by email, or calling our office, at 336-570-6740.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

