

Goss's Wilt Of Corn

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Goss's wilt is a bacterial disease of corn (dent corn, popcorn, sweet corn). The disease results in long, tan spots of dead tissue anywhere on leaves. These lesions typically have characteristic "freckles" (Fig. 1). Infected leaves usually become blighted. Crops other than corn are not affected by this disease.

Goss's wilt has a long history of causing problems in several Plains states, especially in Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming. In the past few years, the disease has also been found in scattered fields in Indiana and Illinois. Aerobiology models suggest that the bacterium may have spread further last season, so growers along the Ohio River should keep a watch out for this dis-

ease in the coming growing season.

The disease doesn't represent a dramatic new threat to Kentucky corn. It can be very destructive, causing losses as high as 60 bu/acre. However, there are many hybrids with adequate resistance to the disease, so if you have an outbreak, selecting resistant hybrids will dramatically reduce the risk in future plantings.

Of course, fungicides do not provide protection against a bacterial disease like Goss's wilt, and there is no reason to think that other products applied by spray application will offer any meaningful control.

More detailed information on scouting and recognition of Goss's wilt will be available in Kentucky Pest News in May, closer to the time when you'll want to be watching for the disease. Δ

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Figure 1. Goss's wilt of corn, showing dark green flecks and "freckles".

Photo by Carl Bradley, University of Illinois



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