

Pioneer Talks Crops

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Growers are finally done planting and now the heat has set in. It appears we are in for another hot year with some areas in the upper mid-South needing rain as we enter the reproductive stages of many crops.

There have been several reports of high insect pressure in all crops this year. Japanese beetles, stinkbugs and bean leaf beetles have been spotted in several areas. The most common reports have been of yellow-striped armyworms and soybean pod worms.

The soybean crop is later this year, thus insects will be hitting sooner than normal in the life cycle of the plant. The University of Missouri states that the thresholds for leaf-feeding insects before bloom is 30 percent leaf defoliation and from bloom to maturity is 20 percent leaf defoliation or 10 percent pod damage. Commodity prices may have an influence on the decision to spray. It may be wise to treat fields below these threshold levels when the commodity price is higher. Soybeans are not able to compensate as well during reproductive stages, so be sure to scout regularly.

Fungicide application for plant health in soybeans is getting closer as well. Most fungicide companies state the optimum timing for a plant health application of fungicides on soybeans is at the R3 stage of development. This is deter-

mined by inspecting the top four nodes of the plant for a 1/4-inch pod. An insecticide also can be applied at this time to take advantage of the application made for the fungicide. Be sure to check the variety ratings for frogeye leaf spot on all brands. Several popular varieties are not as tolerant to frogeye leaf spot and may respond well to fungicide applications.

Reports of brittle snap have surfaced in corn in some areas of the upper mid-South. Many factors affect brittle snap severity such as growing conditions, growing geography, crop management practices, growth-regulator herbicide use, soil type, storm timing and hybrid genetics. When corn enters the grand growth stage, it grows very rapidly and sometimes is unable to



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develop strength between the nodes. This leaves the plant susceptible to snapping under high wind conditions. Late-planted corn tends to be more susceptible due to the rapid accumulation of GDUs. The rapid growth stage also matches up more with the late spring/early summer storms. Growers should plant a package of hybrids and manage growth-regulating herbicides carefully to lessen the risk of brittle snap. Δ

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