

Southern Rust Found In Jefferson County Corn

Growers Should Scout For Symptoms

LONOKE, ARK.

Southern rust has been confirmed in four Jefferson County cornfields and University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture experts are advising corn growers to scout for signs of the fungus in their fields.

Travis Faske, extension plant pathologist with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture said Wednesday that the disease appeared in Arkansas about a month after being spotted in Louisiana. Conditions that favor disease consist of high temperatures – 80 to 90 degrees F, high relative humidity, and frequent rainfall.

The fungus that causes southern rust, *Puccinia polysora*, creates round or oval pustules that are orange or light cinnamon-colored. In Jefferson County, symptoms appeared in “one

of every 20 plants in the fields,” Faske said.

Jason Kelley, extension agronomist for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, said southern rust shows up every year.

“Right now, the concern is whether or not the corn is far enough along not to be damaged by southern rust,” he said. “Producers should be scouting to see if any southern rust is present before deciding whether to spray a fungicide or not.”

Because southern rust can be confused with other diseases, growers unsure of the symptoms should bring samples to their county extension office for testing.

Read more of Faske’s article about southern rust at Arkansascrops.com or contact your county extension office. Δ