

# Soybean Forum Features Insect, Disease Problems

OAK GROVE, LA.

Identifying stink bugs and choosing the right variety are important issues, crop production experts told soybean producers at a recent meeting.

The LSU AgCenter, the University of Arkansas and Mississippi State University provided speakers on these and other production topics at the 2009 Tri-State Soybean Forum.

Stink bugs are the primary problem in Louisiana, said Dr. Roger Leonard, LSU AgCenter entomologist.

"Because of the emergence of the red-banded species, most of our ag economists budget three insecticide applications for insects in soybeans in the early planting system," Leonard said. "In many cases, if you miss one application, you don't have any beans to harvest."

"The red-banded stink bug has migrated throughout the entire state. We find it in every soybean-producing parish," he said.

The bean leaf beetle is a persistent pest and the corn earworm is a sporadic pest, but both are incredibly damaging, Leonard said.

"It has not been common in Louisiana, but more so in Arkansas," he said. "There are a lot of opportunities to control it, but you have to find it."

Cercospora blight is a destructive and consistent disease, said Dr. Boyd Padgett, LSU AgCenter plant pathologist. It begins in the upper soybean canopy and usually initiates very late.

Padgett warned about other diseases such as downy mildew, frog eye, aerial blight, stem canker, sudden death and bacteria pustule.

"Don't hesitate to contact your county agent if you have a problem identifying diseases," Padgett said.

"Hopefully rust will not be a big deal. It hasn't been," he said. "I think we need to keep our eye on it."

For root-knot nematodes, Padgett suggested taking soil samples from the field perimeter. "Utilize your university soil testing lab," he said.

"Ideally, you want a high-yield, disease-resistant variety," Padgett said. "Choose your varieties that are tested near where you live."

Padgett said there are good fungicides, but "we don't have any silver bullets."

Jim Daven of Commercial Grain Cattle Inc. gave a soybean market outlook.

"The market this year is going to be quite complex," Daven said. "We have more players in this game now."

He said today's purchasing environment is influenced by energy markets, competitive issues, price forecasting errors, terrorism, growing Asian demand, government policies and biofuels.

"All of these factors didn't play such an important part in the past as they are now, and you better consider every one of them because one out of all that are listed can turn this market up or down dramatically in a short period of time," Daven said.

"We're not going to see the \$15 (a bushel) beans because of the money flow," Daven predicted. "Hopefully, some of you implemented marketing plans and captured double-digit returns last year."

"It is absolutely critical that we have a marketing plan in place," Daven said. "When these prices go up, do something. We're going to have limited opportunity to lock into these higher prices. If it makes it to \$11, it's not going to last long." △

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