

Specialist Says To Consider Integrated Pest Management (IPM) On Your Farm

SPRINGFIELD, MO.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a systematic approach to solving pest problems. According to Jay Chism, agronomy specialist with University of Missouri Extension, all categories of pests (insects, diseases, and weeds, etc) can be controlled using IPM.

"Putting a successful IPM program into action on your farm involves the following five steps," said Chism. "First, identify key pests and the damage they cause, then monitor pest populations on a regular basis and determine the potential for economic loss or significant reduction of aesthetic value. Then choose the proper management tactic or combination of tactics and evaluate the effectiveness of the management plan."

PEST ID

Proper identification of a pest is important for several reasons.

"First of all, the pest may not be at an economic level that requires control. Not all insects are pests, some are beneficial. Proper selection of a pesticide depends on correct pest identification," said Chism.

Several MU Extension guide sheets are available to help identify various crop pests. Visit the MU Plant Protection Program website at <http://ppp.missouri.edu/> to find images of crop pests in Missouri.

MONITOR PEST POPULATIONS

"Rather than calendar-based treatments, IPM stresses scouting practices to detect pests and determine if action is necessary. If damage can be detected before a serious pest population becomes established, crop loss may be avoided," said Chism.

In Missouri, black cutworm is an IPM success story. MU Extension pest managers can forecast the arrival of this migratory pest before damages occur. Using insect trap count data from insect trappers and degree-day modeling to calculate the predicted date of the damaging larval stage of this pest, corn producers and crop professionals are notified to scout fields.

The program avoids needless insecticide applications, producing both economical and environmental benefits.

To be notified about pest alerts in Missouri visit <http://ppp.missouri.edu/pestmonitoring/subscribe.htm> and get up-to-date information about seasonal pests in your area.

POTENTIAL FOR ECONOMIC LOSS

When using Integrated Pest Management practices, control measures are based on an economic threshold. To justify treatment, pest populations or pest damage has to exceed this threshold.

For many of Missouri's common agronomic insect pests, thresholds have been developed as a result of many years of research. For more information about pest control on agronomic crops request the 2009 Missouri Pest Management Guide M171 from your local MU Extension office. There is a \$20 fee for the guide.

PEST MANAGEMENT TACTICS

Producers that practice IPM use multiple tactics to control crop pests. Integrated pest management tactics include biological, cultural, physical, genetic and chemical aspects.

"Contact an MU agronomy specialist in your region to find out the latest information on specific pests and control measures on crops you is growing," said Chism.

EVALUATION

The success of an integrated pest management program depends on evaluation of its results.

What worked well, which aspects need improvement, and which should be eliminated? What are the benefits of the program in financial return and environmental or social value?

"Growers and consultants are increasingly aware that their ability to continue producing depends on favorable public perception of their practices. Part of the solution is to adopt IPM. It is important to consider that as knowledge and technology evolve, so will IPM programs," said Chism.

For more information, contact any of these MU Extension agronomy specialists in southwest Missouri: Tim Schnakenberg in Stone County, (417) 357-6812; Jay Chism in Barton County, (417) 682-3579; John Hobbs in McDonald County, (417) 223-4775 or Brie Menjoulet in Hickory County, (417) 745-6767. Δ



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