

Washtenaw County MSU Extension Field Crops Newsletter

By Ned M. Birkey, MSU Extension Educator for Agriculture & Natural Resources
Contact Ned for Field Crop information @ 734-260-3442 or email birkey@msu.edu

Volume 2, Number 1

January 2008

Corn/ Soybean and Agronomy Day Meeting

Farmers in Monroe, Washtenaw and other southeast Michigan counties are welcome and invited to participate in a January 9, 2008 Corn and Soybean Update and Agronomy Day educational program at Cabela's. This meeting is free of charge but all participants will need a ticket to guarantee them a seat and a walleye dinner.

Topics covered this year include:

- What's New in Managing Soybean Aphid
- Western Bean Cutworm: A New Michigan Pest
- MSU Weed Guide Update
- Management of Hard to Control Weeds
- Field Crop Diseases Review for 2007
- Benefits of Soil Applied Herbicides in No-Till Soybeans
- Sulfur Management in Soybeans
- New Uses for Corn and Soybeans

Corn and Soybean Market Prospects for 2008
Registration begins at 8:30am at Cabela's and the meeting will begin at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. Pesticide re-certification credits have been applied for. To register, contact the Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170. Tickets will be mailed to all those who register. Those without a ticket are not guaranteed a seat or a meal as this meeting normally is full. For a brochure, directions or more information, contact the Washtenaw County Extension office at 734-997-1678. Cabela's is located at US 23 and M-50 in Dundee, Michigan.

Soybean Rust Update

I have just returned from the 2007 National Soybean Rust Symposium, courtesy of the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee. Without writing about all seven pages of notes, here are some highlights for farmers in southeast Michigan.

- Asian Soybean Rust was found on soybeans October 16 in Ridgetown, Ontario.

- USDA had an active, wet deposition, spore trap somewhere in southeast Michigan and captured rust spores for the third year in a row. This likely took place during late August.
- 2005 Rust was found in 131 counties in 8 states.
- 2006 Rust was found in 274 counties in 15 states.
- 2007 Rust was found in 301 counties in 19 states. Rust would likely have spread to more sites except for being a generally dry year. An estimated 1.34 million acres of soybeans were sprayed for rust in 2007.
- There are currently 40 fungicides registered for rust. Since farmers in Brazil have learned to manage rust and achieve good soybean yields by scouting, spraying and managing their crop rotation, farmers here can do the same.
- Early detection was a key part of managing this new disease. Farmers should scout fields for this disease starting at the R1 (bloom) stage. Some nozzles and pressures work better than others.
- There are 93 alternate hosts for Rust. Only a few may be grown in our area, including green beans or lupins.
- Sentinel plots were scouted by me in Monroe, Washtenaw and Lenawee counties in 2007. There will be a sentinel plot program in 2008, although I still need a cooperator in Washtenaw County.

With all the soybean double crop acreage in 2007 and a very wet August, rust spores likely made it to our area. Did the spores germinate into rust lesions? Since rust was found in nearby Ontario, there may well have been rust in a soybean field in southeast Michigan.

2008 will likely see more soybean acres than in 2007. For this and other reasons, I will likely have early and late season in-the-field I.P.M. meetings in both Monroe and Washtenaw counties.

2007 Census of Agriculture

January 2008 is the time for all farmers to complete the 2007 Census of Agriculture forms. Every five years the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts a complete count of the nation's farms and ranches and the people who operate them.

The Michigan data from the 2002 census showed that agriculture provides \$60.1 billion in direct and indirect benefits to Michigan's economy. Census data can be compiled by U.S. Congressional District. This has been very helpful to convey the importance of agriculture in the 15th Michigan Congressional District to Congressman John D. Dingell.

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Farmers can return their forms by mail or fill out the Census online via a secure web site.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, contact the NASS Michigan Field Office at 800-453-7501 or visit:

www.agcensus.usda.gov.

Ohio State Corn/ Soybean Day

Ohio State University has a Corn/ Soybean Day educational program on Friday, January 11, 2008 at Founder's Hall, Sauder Farm and Craft Village, Archbold, Ohio. Michigan farmers are invited and welcome to participate. There is a fee of \$15 if paid by January 7 or \$30 afterwards.

Topics include:

- Low Linoleic Soybean Production and Premiums
- Insects in Corn and Soybeans
- Disease Identification and Fungicide Applications to Corn
- Midwest Corn Production Best Management Practices
- Precision Nitrogen Management

Information is available at the Monroe and Washtenaw County Extension offices. Michigan pesticide re-certification credits have been applied for. For more information contact the Fulton County, Ohio Extension office at 419-337-9210.

Stored Grain Management and Fumigation Training for Farmers

Stored Grain Management and Fumigation Training for Farmers will be held on January 14, 2008 at Michigan State University. There is a \$50 charge to participate, payable to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office.

Topics include;

- A Grain Buyer's Perspective on Grain Quality
- Management Practices for Minimizing Pest Problems in Stored Grains
- Grain Bin Sanitation
- Stored Grain Insect Pest Identification and Management
- Fumigation Products, Procedures, Calculations, Hazards, Safety Practices and Safety Equipment
- Fumigation Regulatory Overview and Update

This meeting has been approved for two fumigation re-certification credits. The Michigan Department of Agriculture will be available to administer the fumigation exam to farmers who do not currently carry the fumigation certification at the conclusion of the educational program.

For more information, contact Bruce MacKellar at 269-467-5511.

Soybean Sulfur Study Results

For 2007 Michigan State University had a study in soybeans to see if adding sulfur fertilizer was beneficial to this crop. The question was, 'has "acid rain" diminished, resulting in lower amounts of atmospheric sulfur for field crops in Michigan?' One field study was done by Ned Birkey, EANRA and hosted at the Delmer Cilley farm, southwest of Dundee, Michigan.

Four rates of ammonium thiosulfate were applied post-emerge to R1 growth stage soybeans and the yields recorded. The rates applied were; zero, 5 pounds per acre, 10 pounds and 20 pounds. There were four replications of each of the four rates.

For the second consecutive year of this study, soybean yields did not increase statistically at any of the rates applied. Although soybean do need small amounts of sulfur as a nutrient, adding more, following the procedure, did not benefit the crop.

Tax Management Tips for Farmers

First of all the 2007 Farmer's Tax Guides have arrived at the Extension Office. These are available free of charge, though there may be a charge if you request mailing.

Second, following are some items highlighted of tax law changes and other tax management tips.

- For 2007 the section 179 direct expensing dollar limit of property placed into service in 2007 is \$125,000.
- The maximum net self-employment earnings subject to social security part (12.4%) of the self-employment tax increased to \$97,500 for 2007. For 2008, the maximum earnings rate will increase to \$102,000. There is no maximum limit on earnings subject to the Medicare part (2.9%).
- File Form 1099-MISC if you pay at least \$600 in rents, services and other miscellaneous payments in your farming business to an individual (for example, an accountant or a veterinarian), who is not your employee and is not incorporated.
- Form W-4 should be made available to your employees and encourage them to check their income tax withholding for 2008. Those employees who owed a large amount of tax or received a large refund for 2007 may need to file a new Form W-4.
- The self-employment health insurance deduction is 100% on the front of Form 1040.
- The child tax credit remains at \$1,000 for children 16 and under as of December 31, 2007. This amount remains at \$1,000 through 2010. Phase-out begins when modified adjusted gross income is \$110,000 for married, filing jointly, or \$75,000 for singles.
- Pay your children wages for work actually performed for the farm business. If the child is under 18 and works for a parent's trade or business, their wages may be subject to income tax withholding, but are exempt from social security and Medicare taxes.
- Frequently unrecorded and forgotten expenses include:
 1. Educational expenses that maintain or improve your skills, such as magazine subscriptions, books, Extension educational meeting fees to Cabela's or other farm organization meeting out of pocket costs, including mileage.
 2. Travel expenses connected with your business, particularly if it includes meals and

lodging. The IRS mileage rate is .485 cents per mile.

3. Entertainment expenses when hosting others where the predominant purpose is the furthering of your farm business operation.

Income averaging is one approach for calculating income taxes. If 2007 income will be substantially larger than in the previous three years, then ask your tax accountant about using this method to average your income over several years, which may reduce your tax bracket this year and not change your previous tax brackets.

Because of the potential for tax category shifts due to high incomes all farmers are encouraged to spend more time at and do a better job of recordkeeping. One option is to hire someone to do the records, such as a spouse. Provide that person with insurance as a part of the wage and benefit package and then the spouse can claim the farmer as a spouse on the insurance.

The Michigan State University Telfarm computerized recordkeeping system is highly recommended because it is customized for your farm business, can include check writing and payroll options, and offers "virtually unlimited" service. For more information on Telfarm, contact Van Varner, District Farm Management Educator at 248-347-0269 ext.224.



Calendar

2008 MSU Extension Winter Meeting Calendar
Monroe County Extension Office 734-240-3170
Washtenaw County Extension Office
734-997-1678

Thursday, January 3 and January 4, 2008 15th Southwest Agricultural Conference, University of Guelph, Ridgetown, OH. \$120 registration fee. 1-866-222-9682.

Tuesday, January 8, 2008 High Tunnels 101, 1-5pm., OSU Extension and Toledo Botanical Gardens. 419-578-6783.

Wednesday, January 9, 2008 Corn and Soybean Meeting 9:00am to 3:00pm at Cabela's. Free, but need to register to Monroe County Extension at 734-240-3170. RUP.

January 9-12, 2008 16th National No-Tillage Conference, \$247 fee. Cincinnati, OH

Friday, January 12, 2008 8:30am Registration; 9:00am to 3:5pm. OSU Corn and Soybean Day, Founder's Hall at Sauder Farm, Archbold, Ohio. \$15 if paid by January 7; \$30 at door. RUP.

Monday, January 14, 2008 Stored Grain Management and Fumigation Training for Farmers 9:30am to 3:00pm. MSU Livestock Pavilion. \$50 registration fee. RUP.

January 14-16, 2008 Michigan Agribusiness Winter Conference and Trade Show, Lansing Center

January 14-16, 2008 Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association Congress, The Nia Center at the Kalahari Resort, Sandusky, OH. Fee. 614-487-1117.

Thursday, January 24, 2008 Washtenaw and Monroe County Conservation Districts' annual meetings.

Wednesday, January 30, 2008 Overcoming the Barriers to Higher Soybean Yields; a Soybean 2010 Program. Free but register with Van Buren County MSU Extension at 269-657-8213. RUP.

Friday, February 8, 2008 Center for Excellence Agronomic and Outlook meeting, Lenawee Christian Center, Adrian. RUP.

Tuesday, February 12, 2008 Wheat Farmer Meeting 9:00am to 3:00pm at Cabela's. \$20 registration fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 7324-240-3170. RUP.

February 13-16, 2008 National Farm Machinery Show, Louisville, Ky.

February 21-22, 2008 Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference, Ohio Northern University, Ada, OH. 419-422-3851.

February 28-March 1 2008 Commodity Classic, Nashville, Tn.

Wednesday, March 5, 2008 Pesticide Training and Review meeting 9:00am to 12:30pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$10 fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170.

Wednesday, March 5, 2008 M.D.A. Pesticide Examinations 1:00 to 4:00pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$ fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170.

Thursday, March 6, 2008 Pesticide Training and Review 12:30 to 4:00pm at Washtenaw County MSU Extension office. \$10 fee. Register to Washtenaw County MSU Extension at 734-997-1678.

Friday, March 14, 2008 Pesticide Training and Review 12:30 to 4:00pm at Washtenaw County MSU Extension office. \$10 fee. Register to Washtenaw County MSU Extension at 734-997-1678.

Wednesday, March 19, 2008 9:00am and 1:30pm M.D.A. Pesticide examinations. Fee. Call Washtenaw County MSU Extension at 734-997-1678 for reservations.

Wednesday, April 2, 2008 Pesticide Training and Review meeting 9:00am to 12:30pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$10 fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170.

Wednesday, April 2, 2008 M.D.A. Pesticide Examinations 1:00 to 4:00pm at 4-H Activity Center at Monroe County fairgrounds. \$10 fee. Register to Monroe County Extension office at 734-240-3170.

