

Soybean Management Field Day, Aug. 12

"Growing America's Future" is the theme for the 2005 Soybean Management Field Day series which will be held at four locations across the state. On Friday, Aug. 12, Lancaster County farmer Steve DeBoer will host one of these field stops at his farm near Holland from 9 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Free registration is available the day of the event.

The Soybean Management Field Days are sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board in cooperation with University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension and are funded through checkoff dollars. By attending, producers can obtain ideas and insight about the challenges they face in producing a quality crop at a profitable price in today's global economy.

Field day presenters include UNL specialists, educators and industry consultants. Topics are:

- Conventional Soybean Weed Control and Roundup Ready Resistance Management
- Growing Soybeans for High Yield and Quality
- Soybean Aphids and Rust
- More Soybean Dollars in Your Pocket.

Each stop also includes demonstration plots, a sponsored lunch and time for questions.

"Every soybean farmer in Nebraska is encouraged to mark their calendar to attend a Soybean Management Field Day near them," says Greg Anderson, Chairman, Nebraska Soybean Board. "Surveys from past participants show that by attending, they can gain valuable information and insight that will add to their bottom line."

For more information, go to <http://arcd.unl.edu/soydays.htm> or contact the NE Soybean Board at (800) 852-BEAN or UNL Extension at (800) 529-8030.

Directions to DeBoer's Farm

Field site is on the south side of Panama Road on the east edge of Holland.

From I-80/South Hwy 77 intersection (exit 397) — proceed 15 miles south on Highway 77, then 6¼ miles east on Panama Road.

From Hickman — 1½ miles south to flashing yellow light, east 2¼ miles.

From Hwy 43 & 158 St. junction with Hwy 2 — proceed 9 miles south (158 St. turns into 162 St.). Then 4¾ miles west on Panama Road.



Free Soybean Cyst Nematode Sample Kits Available

While soybean rust has been in the spotlight since last November, soybean cyst nematodes (SCN) cause the greatest losses to U.S. and Nebraska soybean producers. In many cases, producers are not familiar with SCN or only look for it when there is a problem in a soybean field and all other possibilities have been eliminated.

To increase the awareness of SCN and better define its distribution, the Nebraska Soybean Board provided funding for free sampling kits (\$20 value) to be distributed through extension offices to farmers in counties where soybeans are grown.

Each kit contains a bag for you to submit a sample to the Plant & Pest Diagnostic Clinic at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and directions for collecting a soil sample. You will need to collect a soil sample and submit it to the clinic by December 31, 2005.

You can sample for SCN any time during the year. After harvest is a good time to

sample if a field didn't yield as expected and you can't attribute the lower yields to any other factor such as weather, flooding, insect infestations or weed pressure. During the growing season, if you notice areas in a field where the soybeans don't look as healthy and it can't be explained by any of the factors above, it is also a good time to sample.

Since there is a limited quantity of these kits available, they will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis to farmers stopping by the extension office to pick them up. To benefit as many farmers as possible, limit one kit per farm operation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NebGuide G99-1383, "Soybean Cyst Nematode Biology and Management," available at the extension office online at <http://ianr-pubs.unl.edu/plantdisease/g1383.htm>

Plant Alfalfa in August

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

The best time for fall seeding alfalfa in eastern Nebraska is during the month of August, provided adequate soil moisture is available. Farmers sometimes wait until middle or late September to plant alfalfa. This is often too late because the plants do not have a chance to become established before the first killing frost. The latest alfalfa should be seeded in the fall is Sept. 10 in Lancaster County. If planting cannot be completed by that time, it is best to wait for another season.

Alfalfa seed needs to be planted ¼- to ½-inch deep in fine textured soils and ¾-inch deep in sandy soils for best germination. Regardless of seeding time, it is critical that alfalfa be

planted into a firm seed bed. Alfalfa seeds must have close contact with soil particles and soil moisture to insure rapid emergence. A firm seedbed helps prevent seed from being planted too deep. Leave just enough loose soil to cover seed after planting.

Dr. Bruce Anderson, Extension Forage Specialist, says if you can't bounce a basketball on the seedbed prior to planting alfalfa, the seed bed is too loose. Don't have a basketball? Walk across the seedbed with hard soled shoes, if your heel sinks in more than ½ inch, it is too loose. A good rain after tillage will firm the seedbed. Harrowing with the spikes set flat or rolling with a packer will firm seedbeds provided there is some moisture in the soil.

Complete tillage (disking) following row crops is okay if

the soil is firmed up by either rain, sprinkler irrigation or packer-seeders. If the untilled soil surface is already smooth, no-till planters have been very successful. In fact, no-till seeding of alfalfa following small grain crops has become the trend among successful alfalfa producers.

Before seeding alfalfa, whether you plant in spring or fall, do a complete soil test. Apply and incorporate lime and phosphorus fertilizer, if needed, and be sure to inoculate the seed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NebGuide 652, "Seeding and Renovating Alfalfa" available at the extension office or online at <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/Range/g652.htm>

St. Johnswort in Lancaster County

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

St. Johnswort weed seems to be increasing in this part of the state, the concern is it can have detrimental effects on animals that consume it. People need to be aware of this weed and its potential to harm livestock.

Toxicity Symptoms

Consumption of St. Johnswort causes a photosensitizing reaction to non-pigmented skin of livestock exposed to sunlight. Light colored animals are most susceptible, developing dermatitis, which can include skin blisters and hair loss. Blistering can also occur in the non-pigmented skin of the mouth, nose and ears. Symptoms do not result from casual contact; the plant must be eaten. The toxin builds up in the body over time so symptoms may not show up until the animal has been eating the



St. Johnswort leaf

plants for several days to a week.

Care of Affected Animals

There is no antidote for hypericin, the toxin found in St. Johnswort. Care includes, removing St. Johnswort from the animal's diet and bringing affected animals

out of direct sunlight. If the sunburn is mild, conservative treatment and supportive care is all that is required. Animals will resent handling and horses will not be able to be ridden for at least a couple of weeks. More severely affected animals, including animals whose eyes are affected or where the skin is blistered or sloughing, should be seen by a veterinarian.

Management and Control

Livestock prefer grass over St. Johnswort when both plants are present. This may lead to

overgrazing of grasses which provides openings into which St. Johnswort may spread. Dried St. Johnswort in hay or processed feeds is somewhat less toxic than when eaten fresh but animals are less able to avoid eating it, so feeding hay containing St. Johnswort is a concern. If one must feed hay containing the weed, keep animals in the shade or inside a building during daylight hours while they are being given the hay and for a week after they are no longer consuming it.

Remove animals before spraying pastures with herbicides until after the St. Johnswort plants are completely dead, because herbicide treatment often increases palatability which might result in animals consuming the plants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Educational resource 309-04 "St. Johnswort — Identification, Management and Control" (includes color photos) available at the extension office or online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/ag/Factsheets/309.pdf>

Ammoniate Wheat Straw for Extra Feed

Tom Dorn
Extension Educator

If you think you might be short on forage for your cow herd, don't overlook wheat straw as a forage source. Straw can make good feed for your dry stock cows if you treat it with anhydrous ammonia. "Treating wheat straw with anhydrous ammonia can make it almost as digestible and as readily eaten as average prairie hay. This could help stretch your hay supply. But you have to do it right," according to Bruce Anderson, NU Extension Forage Specialist.

Bale straw soon after grain harvest, preferably with some moisture or dew on it. Then,

gather bales into rows that are stacked like a pyramid. Next, cover the entire stack with one sheet of 6 to 8 millimeter black plastic. Use ropes or other methods to hold plastic in place. Make sure that you seal the edges of the plastic on the ground with loose soil to prevent leakage. Once that is done, you are ready to insert a pipe into the center of your stack and attach the pipe to the anhydrous tank.

Be careful — ammonia can be dangerous. Slowly turn on the anhydrous until the plastic balloons slightly. Don't go too fast or the plastic can rupture. Next, check and repair any leaks. Continue to add anhydrous slowly until you have added 60 pounds per ton of

straw. This should take about 10 minutes for each ton of straw, depending on the moisture content of the straw.

When you are through, turn off the tank, remove the pipe, and seal its opening. Keep the plastic on the stack until about a week before feeding. Then open one end to allow excess ammonia gas to escape. Ammoniated wheat straw can be very valuable feed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Extension circular EC 89-265, "Ammonia Treatment of Low Quality Forages" is available at the extension office for 50 cents, or online free at <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/pubs/beef/ec265.htm>