

Aphids had big impact on soybean yield

For release: Wednesday, October 22, 2008

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BROOKINGS, S.D. – Recently completed harvests in Brookings and Clay counties indicated that soybean aphids had a big impact on soybean yields this year. That’s according to Extension Entomologist Mike Catangui at South Dakota State University.

“Growers who took the aphids seriously and sprayed timely in late-July or early-August when soybeans were at their R2 (full bloom stage) likely increased their yields by 16 to 29 bushels per acre, depending on the insecticide used,” Catangui said.

Catangui conducts annual insecticide performance research statewide on insect pests of soybeans, corn, and sunflowers. The soybean research plots were planted and harvested using very precise farm implements operated by the SDSU Crop Performance Trial Unit; each insecticide treatment was replicated eight times and randomly assigned to uniform field plots using standard experimental designs. “New and existing insecticides and seed treatments are rigorously tested each year to see if they can indeed control insect pests, and improve the farmer’s bottom line,” according to Catangui.

Highlights of this year’s soybean insecticide research from Brookings and Beresford are as follows:

- ▶ Spraying for aphids increased soybean yields by 16.2 to 28.9 bushels per acre.
- ▶ A single spray at R2 (full bloom) stage was sufficient.
- ▶ A seed treatment coated onto the seeds before planting was competitive with sprays.
- ▶ Timing was critical as 16.0 bushels per acre were lost when spraying was delayed by ten days.

“It appears that the choices that we make when trying to manage soybean aphids during the growing season can actually have a profound influence in our potential income at harvest. We have to use the correct economic threshold as well as the best insecticide if we want to maximize our income from growing soybean here in South Dakota,” Catangui said.

Catangui encourages soybean growers to attend Extension meetings this winter to discuss and plan control options for the 2009 growing season. For more information about soybean insects, visit Catangui’s Web site at: http://plantsci.sdstate.edu/ent/entpubs/SEE_Mail.htm

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