



Pest Scouting Becoming More Important

Each year, new and better chemicals are released for use in crop production. This year is no exception (see back page). With the release of these new products, choices are getting more and more difficult. That's where the pest scouting consultant can help you the most. The pest scouting program includes identification of insect pests and diseases, and the best control option is given to the grower. Everything is taken into consideration when making this decision. Natural predators of insect pests are very beneficial, and in some cases allow a commercial grower to skip the insecticide treatment. Timing of applications is also crucial. When the spray is one week off, the insecticide treatment might not be used to its full capacity. If the spray is too early, the pest populations might not be fully present, and spray doesn't control late emerging pests. The application may be too late, and damage is already done by the time the chemi-

cal is applied.

Nematode populations have been on the increase the past couple of years, and damage has been seen in tubers from many fields. Nematode sampling and the right treatments are needed to protect tubers from damage and likely becoming culls. Some fields may not show visible symptoms, but still have visible damage once potatoes are moved out of storage.

Agro has an intensive 10 week disease scouting program which is used to identify diseases present in the fields. This is very beneficial for rouging of fields prior to certification. Training of rouging crews is also available.

Another benefit from Agro's pest scouting program is the knowledge of what is going on around the Valley. We have consultants working in all areas, and they can determine where insect populations are near problem levels.

Agro's New Greenhouse

As most of you know, Corky Ringspot has been observed in more fields in the last couple of years. This is a disease caused by the Tobacco Rattle Virus, which is transmitted into the plant by stubby root nematodes. Either the virus or the nematode can be present in a field without causing any damage. But, if both are present, Corky Ringspot will occur. While nematode sampling is routinely done on many fields, it has not been possible to test the soil for the virus. Plants must first be grown in the soil and then ELISA and PCR tests are done on those plants. In April, Agro will be putting up a greenhouse so that we can grow plants in the soil obtained in the nematode sampling process. These plants can then be tested for Tobacco Rattle Virus. This will be one more tool for the farmer to use in determining their risk for Corky Ringspot and how their fields should be treated. We are hopeful that this service will be available to Agro clients this coming fall.

Green Peach Aphid Suppression and Monitoring Program

Agro Engineering has been conducting the Green Peach Aphid Integrated Pest Management Program since 1986. Every year, we spray hundreds of plum trees with a dormant oil to smother Green Peach Aphid eggs. These prunus trees are the only overwintering host of this aphid. This spring, many more aphid eggs have been observed on the plum trees than normal. This may be partly due to the long, warm fall weather we observed last year. As soon as the weather allows, we will begin spraying plum and peach trees from Del Norte to Hooper, and Monte Vista to the Center area. If you know of any plum or peach trees that are not currently on our spray list, please alert our office right away. Since this program is funded by CPAC, through the CSU Research Center Committee, it is free to homeowners, and most are happy to cooperate.

Chemical updates for 2002

The time has arrived to begin preparing ourselves for the long, hard work this summer. Now is also the time to begin organizing your arsenal for control of those nasty crop pests. Below is a brief update on chemistries, currently labeled, as well as newly labeled, for the 2002 growing season.

Fungicides:

1. Bravo Ultrex/WeatherStik: Re-Entry interval now shortened to 12 hours; total amount of product applied per season is less than before.
2. Phostrol: Product manufactured by Agtrol; labeled as in-furrow treatment for control of pink rot and pythium leak. New active ingredient; not related to Mefenoxam
3. Equus DF: New formulation for use in 2002
4. Ultra Flourish: New product manufactured by Agtrol; same active ingredient as Ridomil.

Insecticides:

1. Platinum/Ridomil Pre-Pak: Includes full rate of platinum, along with the full rate of Ridomil for disease control; first hybrid product to include an insecticide and fungicide
2. Actara: Foliar spin-off of Platinum; active ingredient is Thiamethoxam. Currently labeled at 1.5 oz/acre rate, but may be increased to 3 oz/acre for Colorado this year

Herbicides:

1. Matrix: This product is now registered to be applied by air in Colorado
2. Raptor: Now labeled for use in alfalfa; controls kochia, lambsquarter, redstem filaree, mustards, nightshades, pigweeds, and shepard's purse. Also targets grasses, such as volunteer cereals and pigeongrass.

Ask your Agro consultant if any of these new products may benefit your program.



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