
The objective of this document is to provide you with current and helpful information regarding water protection, and the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP).

Early Disease Management in Field Crops Brings Long-Term Benefits

Across Michigan, with planting largely concluded and the growing season well underway for crops, producers and agronomy professionals are looking ahead to in-season management options to ensure strong yields for corn, wheat and soybeans.

With crops established, weed control, nutrient management and disease prevention are top priorities. A solid management plan can head-off potential problems before challenges arise, but farmers and agronomists should be ready to modify plans based on field conditions and weather patterns.

Disease prevention, especially of fusarium head blight, is a primary concern in wheat. Strong fungicide management plans are crucial in controlling this disease, but the optimal application window only extends for several days before and during flowering. High leaf disease pressure this year, particularly strip rust, further adds to the importance of fungicide applications. The high end of labeled rates should be applied, as well as surfactants when recommended. In most areas of the state, the application window is well underway.

In soybeans, vigilance to prevent disease is especially important as the crop transitions from vegetative to reproductive phases. A particular eye on fields with known history of white mold is important, as white mold scrotia from previous outbreaks will inoculate a field. By knowing the history of white mold in a field, preventative measures can be better targeted. This is especially important given the significant white mold outbreaks seen in 2014 and 2015, leaving many fields with a white mold history to monitor.

With corn planting virtually complete, farmers are moving ahead applying nitrogen. Locality is key; a keen awareness of the influence of weather conditions on N availability for corn allows farmers to properly apply the right amounts of nitrogen, in the right areas using precision agriculture techniques. This site-specific approach maximizes yield while ensuring environmental stewardship.

For all producers, planning is key. With the growing season moving ahead, advance planning to prepare for, identify and prevent disease impacts will lead to stronger yields in the fall.



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