

## Winnebago County Crops Quick Update

**Assembled by Nick Schneider, Winnebago County Agriculture Agent**

June 1, 2009

**Alfalfa Forage Quality:** May 15, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 17-18", Vegetative, 230  
 May 19, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 20", Vegetative, 210  
 May 19, Scissors Clip RFQ: 302  
 May 21, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 24" Vegetative, 190  
 May 26, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 29" Early Bud, 160, Vegetative  
 May 28, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 30" Bud, 155  
 May 28, Scissors Clip RFQ: 172, Crude Protein: 22.75  
 June 1, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 33", Bud, 145

Based on PEAQ stick and scissors clip measurements, alfalfa fields should have been at the ideal quality and yield at the end of last week. For state-wide data please go to this website:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/scissorsclip/>

PEAQ Sticks can be ordered from the Midwest Forage Association for \$10 plus shipping. Download an order form at: [www.midwestforage.org/PEAQ.php](http://www.midwestforage.org/PEAQ.php)

**Wisconsin Crop Progress:** June 1 2009. Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office

Full report at: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/wi/>

Soil Moisture		
	East Central Wisconsin	State Average
Very Short	3	0
Short	12	4
Adequate	71	68
Surplus	14	28

Wisconsin Weekly Weather								
City	Temperature		GDD (50 base)		Precipitation			
	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal	March 1 to May 30	Normal	Last Week	Since March 1	March 1 dep. from normal	Year to date
Green Bay	55	-5	369	371	2.11	8.67	1.51	1.51
Madison	59	-2	495	493	.51	14.29	5.63	5.51

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Wisconsin Crop Progress					
Crop and percent of acreage	East		State Average		
	Central	Central	This Year	Last Year	5-Year
Corn Emerged	15	45	42	22	45
Soybeans Planted	30	52	54	50	57
Spring Tillage Complete	81	88	90	84	89

**Wisconsin Pest Bulletin: Wisconsin DATCP. Volume 54, Number 6, May 29 2009**

Full report at: <http://pestbulletin.wi.gov/>

### Alfalfa

**ALFALFA WEEVIL** - Populations have increased in most alfalfa fields. Surveys conducted in the southern districts found counts of 1-20 per 25 sweeps, with an average of 6 per 25 sweeps. The degree of feeding injury is still very light in most cases and only a few fields are showing moderate defoliation levels (10-15%). Since first growth alfalfa is at the optimum stage for harvest, there is no reason why significant damage should occur, except in rare fields or if cutting is delayed.

**ALFALFA BLOTCH LEAFMINER** - Pinholes and leaf mines were noted for the first time this week in alfalfa in the south-central counties. The percentage of trifoliates affected varied from 5-80%, and in several fields the extent of injury was well above the economic threshold of 30-40%. Excessive leaf mining by this insect reduces forage quality and may result in yield loss.

**PEA APHID** - A marked population increase occurred in alfalfa in the last reporting period. Most fields show 55 or more per 25 sweeps, while exceptional fields have counts of 250 aphids per 25 sweeps. Significantly, the proportion of small nymphs indicates that reproduction is heavy. Winged forms are present but not numerous at this time.

**ALFALFA PLANT BUG** - Nymphs of various maturities are becoming more noticeable and a combination of this stage as well as the adults range as high as 11 per 25 sweeps in some fields.

**POTATO LEAFHOPPER** - Comparatively high numbers of migrants are already present in alfalfa, likely due to persistent southerly winds during the previous week. Counts vary from 1-8 per 25 sweeps in alfalfa and adults can be found uniformly in fields throughout the southern areas.

**TARNISHED PLANT BUG** - Alfalfa surveyed in the south-central and southwest counties showed 1-10 per 25 sweeps, while in Columbia and Dane counties about ½ of the plant bugs collected were nymphs. Mixed counts of this species and the alfalfa plant bug should not exceed 5 per sweep at any point during the growing season.

**MEADOW SPITTLEBUG** - Spittle masses are becoming more conspicuous. Surveyed fields in Columbia, Dane, Lafayette and Rock counties contained 0-5 per 20 stems, with an average of 1 per 20 stems. Nymphs presently are about half grown.

--Krista Hamilton, DATCP Entomologist

### Corn

**BLACK CUTWORM** - Light damage attributed to this insect has become apparent in some corn fields. Less than 4% of the plants were affected in fields surveyed in Dane County, while in Crawford and Vernon counties 1-11% of plants in the marginal rows showed leaf feeding injury. Larvae from migrant moths that appeared in late April are generally

half grown and capable of cutting corn seedlings. The injurious cutting stage may last 2½-3 weeks, depending on temperatures.

The accompanying map shows degree day (base 50°F) accumulations for 14 localities since the biofix date of April 25. Leaf feeding by early instar larvae can be expected where degree days total 91-311, initial cutting by 4th instar is anticipated in areas where totals range from 312-364, and cutting by 5th instar larvae is projected for advanced southern locations once 365-430 have been reached. Treatment is recommended if more than 5% of plants are damaged.

**EUROPEAN CORN BORER** - Pupation of overwintered corn borers is well underway. The first flight of corn borers began this week with the capture of moths at the East Troy, Marshfield and Mazomanie black light trap locations. On the basis of projected degree day accumulations, the majority of moths should not be expected until June 9-16 in the southern counties, June 11-18 in the central counties, and a week or more later in the northern counties.

## Soybeans

**SOYBEAN APHID** - The first soybean aphids of the growing season should begin to colonize fields by early to mid-June. Previous first detections occurred on June 18 in 2008, May 24 in 2007, June 7 in 2006, and June 3 in 2005. The outlook for soybean aphid in 2009 is uncertain since the Wisconsin network of suction traps documented a very heavy migration last fall, but subsequent surveys failed to find overwintered eggs on buckthorn (the winter host). This inconsistency has complicated forecasts for the soybean aphid, which usually follows an every-other-year cycle of outbreaks. It is speculated that spores of an entomopathic fungus carried by aphids migrating from soybeans caused widespread mortality before egg deposition occurred on the winter host.

**BEAN LEAF BEETLE** - Surveys conducted in 74 randomly selected first growth alfalfa fields yielded only 13 overwintered beetles from May 18-28. This is comparable to the number found in the same counties last season, but considerably less than the 375 beetles collected in the spring of 2007. Specimens were swept from fields in Green, Lafayette, Rock and Trempealeau counties, but not Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Iowa, Jackson or La Crosse counties. Preliminary results indicate very low populations for the southern and west-central areas, thus a low risk of economic injury to emerging soybeans.

--Krista Hamilton, DATCP Entomologist

## The Soy Report, Shawn Conley and Paul Esker

### Flag Emergence and Foliar Fungicides for Wheat

In the past week, wheat development has moved into flag leaf emergence (Feekes 8-9, Zadoks 37-39) and in parts of the state past flag leaf and into the boot growth stage (Feekes 10, Zadoks 40). This is a critical period for making assessments for the need for foliar fungicides. Over the past few years, while we have seen yield responses of 7-10 bushels per acre with a well-timed foliar fungicide application during this period, we have typically seen this response for a susceptible wheat variety. In particular, this response has been due to control of powdery mildew (Figure 1).

### Current Observations Across the State and in the Winter Wheat Variety Trials:

Note: special thanks to Karen Lackermann for this information and update.

We have started to receive some reports of powdery mildew on wheat, primarily in the northeastern part of the state and on susceptible varieties. We have also noted this disease at the Lancaster and Chilton variety trial locations. Overall, the level of powdery mildew (both incidence and severity) has been low and not necessarily on the most critical leaves like flag leaf, flag-1 leaf, or flag-2. The dry weather the past week or so seems to have limited disease development at this point in the growing season.

In observations for other diseases that can be controlled by foliar fungicides, we have noted the following at the winter wheat variety trials locations: septoria leaf blotch, wheat leaf rust, and wheat stripe rust. Overall, the severity of these diseases has been rather low (1-2%). In stems where the disease severity has been higher, the symptoms have been observed mostly in the lower canopy. Across the locations, we have noted wheat leaf rust at all four variety trial sites, however, the highest frequency of these observations have been from Janesville. We have seen septoria leaf blotch at all of our trial locations except the Chilton.