

# TURN ROWS

A NEWSLETTER COVERING THE SOUTHERN PIEDMONT OF NORTH CAROLINA

APRIL 2013  
VOLUME 7: ISSUE 3



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## Topics:

- Head Scab on Wheat
- Corn Insect Pests
- Early Season Soybean Kudzu Bugs
- Wheat not responding to fertilizer

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**CAUTION:** Information & recommendations presented are applicable in the Southern Piedmont of NC & may not apply in your area. Consult your local extension agent.

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## Head Scab on Wheat

### Environment

Wet weather before, during, or after flowering is the main factor in a scab outbreak. The fungus travels in spores from debris of corn and other small grains to reach the small grain head. Warm temperatures (59 to 86 F) before and during flowering also favors scab.

### Control

Unfortunately there is no single management practice to defeat scab. The primary source of the scab fungus is in corn and wheat residues left on the soil surface from previous crops. Conventional tillage that buries the residues can reduce the risk, while planting no-till wheat into corn stubble carries a higher scab risk. If planting no-till wheat after corn, chopping or shredding the corn stalks can help reduce the risk of scab.

### Fungicides

Rain in April and early May will determine if there is a risk of severe head scab in NC. Starting in mid-April you can check the national scab risk forecasting website set up by the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative ([www.wheatscab.psu.edu](http://www.wheatscab.psu.edu)) You can enter a flowering date for wheat and see the level of risk of a severe scab epidemic in your county. If the risk for developing scab is high and the variety being grown does not have moderate resistance, it may be wise to apply a fungicide for wheat control. The most effective fungicides for head scab are Caramba, Prosaro, and Proline.

### Seed Treatments

Because wind and rain spread scab to small grain heads in the spring, seed treatments will not protect the crop from new infections. Planting certified seed is advised, as saved seed from a field could have come from scab infected field and result in a poor stand infected by seedling blight.

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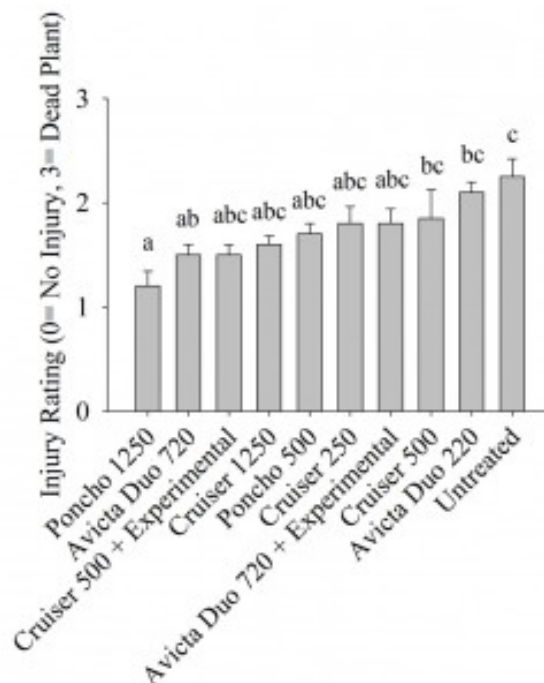
# Corn Insect Pest

## **Slugs:**

Problem due to no-till with seedling corn especially when conditions are cool and wet early in the season. They enjoy low light conditions such as cloudy days, nighttime, and heavy residue. Best Management Practices include removing residue using row sweepers and using a starter fertilizer.

## **Sugarcane Beetle:**

This was a terrible pest in the Piedmont last year. There is no way to predict if it will be a problem or not. Some of the higher seed treatments showed some activity on the beetle. A 2012 Mississippi test found that bifenthrin sprayed in the furrow may have some better activity than seed treatments.



# Early Season Soybean Invasions

If you are planting full-season beans this April or May, you will want to scout the beans early and often. We first reported the bugs in commercial April-planted soybean fields during May of 2012. Do not use an insecticidal seed treatment, as the neonicotinoid class of insecticides are not effective for the insect. Your best option is to keep an eye on the insects, waiting for the adults to complete the field invasion, and to spray once the nymphs hatch from the egg and begin to develop (link to article with photo of small nymphs). It might take 6-8 weeks for adults to completely invade the field before you begin to notice nymphs. The recommended sampling method is the sweep net, with one nymph per sweep being a balance point to spray where you can preserve yield, while minimizing trips with insecticide. You will be tempted not to wait for this. **WARNING.** A grower last year treated the adults before the nymphs showed up (in early June), which resulted in a re-treatment when nymphs showed up. This ended up killing natural enemies so that spider mites began to infest the beans. This then resulted in a third spray. We call this the pesticide treadmill. Once you're on, it's hard to get off!



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# **Why is my wheat yellow?**

Yellowing of wheat this time of year can be caused by several different issues. There are basically 3 options for why wheat is not greening up after nitrogen has been applied. The three main issues are cold injury, nutrient deficiency, and soil viruses.

**Cold Injury:** Cold injury is typically determined by looking at the growing tip of the tissue. Brown tips at the flag leaf that are bent over, or appear to be cut off from the rest of the leaf are a good visual sign of cold damage. Typically there will be enough tissue to compensate for the loss from cold damage.

**Nutrient Deficiency:** Most nutrient deficiencies in this region are caused by either manganese, potash, sulfur, or nitrogen. These nutrient deficiencies can prevent the uptake of nitrogen by the plant as well. To determine if there is a nutrient deficiency, soil and tissue samples should be taken and sent off to the NCDA to determine exactly what nutrient is lacking and how best to correct the problem.

**Soil Viruses:** Soil viruses can sometimes appear like a cold injury or nutrient deficiency. For example, soil borne mosaic will appear like a potash deficiency with the inter-veinal yellowing and discoloration. Also, spindle streak will appear like cold damage with yellowing and browning at the end of the flag leaf. The best way to determine soil viruses is to send whole plant sample to the plant and disease clinic. After determination of a soil virus, only wheat varieties that are not susceptible to those viruses should be planted in the future.

For more information, please go to  
<http://www.smallgrains.ncsu.edu/production-guide.html>

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## Upcoming Events

- April 23/24: NCDA Pesticide School and Testing, Union County Agricultural Center, Monroe, NC
- April 25: Stanly County Agricultural Tour, Stanly County Agri-Civic Center, Albemarle, NC
- May 14: Stanly County Soil Health Field Day, Albemarle, NC
- May 16: Tri-County Small Grains Field Day, Monroe, NC

\*\*\*If you have any questions regarding our upcoming events,  
please contact Jessica Anderson or Andrew Baucom\*\*\*



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