10 Webster Street, Suite 210
Town Square, Box 204
Kentville, NS Canada
B4N 1H7

199 Innovation Drive
AgriTECH Park
Truro, NS
Canada
B2N 6Z4

Prepared by:
Jack van Roestel
Field Crops
(902) 678-7722
j.vanroestel@agrapoint.ca

Bill Thomas
Field Crops
(902) 896-0277
b.thomas@agrapoint.ca

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Field Day Notice

Organized by: Soil and Crop Improvement Association of NS and Atlantic Swine Research Partnership

Date, Time and Place: Monday, August 8th 10:00-2:30pm *(meet at Kentville Research Station, Cornwallis Room)*

Program: Discussion of Hort and Agronomy projects (10 -11:30am)

Lunch (11:30)

Afternoon tour options: 1. Onion and corn project fields or 2. Swine Manure Injection and Water Management

For more information call Rob (896-7092) or Sabrina (893-4116)

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CropLinks

information on forages, corn and cereals

Winter Wheat Pre-Harvest Tour - Wednesday

There are lots of fine looking winter wheat fields in the Valley this year. Timely and consistent showers may have been a curse for haymakers, however well used by wheat during the kernel fill process. The Crop Development Institute (of NSAC) and AgraPoint are jointly hosting a winter wheat and soybean plot tour on Wednesday night, July 27th. This will be a fine opportunity to visit with fellow growers, NSAC and AgraPoint cereal specialists plus view some nice crops.

Time: July 27th, Wednesday night 7:00-9:30pm
Place: Meet at Minas Seed Warehouse, Canning (9362 Hwy.221)
Crops: Winter wheat and triticale variety and management plots. Soybean variety, row spacing and seeding rate trials. Lynhurst Farms corn and spring wheat fields.
Directions: If you need directions call Jack (670-5777). Come and see some nice wheat before the combine does!

Soybean Rust - A Remote but Real Threat

Asian soybean rust, a disease common in Asia and South America, was discovered for the first time in the USA in nine southern states in the fall of 2004. Asian soybean rust is a devastating fungal disease that under the right weather conditions can spread through a field very quickly. If it hits when the plants are flowering and is left untreated, Asian soybean rust can reduce yield by 60 to 100%. It is not known how big of a threat this disease is to the US soybean crop as no one knows how the disease will behave. The good news is that experts don't think the disease is able to overwinter in northern climates, but must be blown in from southern areas. Tropical storms moving north are considered a risk factor. This year the incidences of soybean rust are very few in the Southern USA. With inoculum levels so low in areas that have soybean rust an epidemic in northern areas in 2005 is thought to be highly unlikely.

Preventative fungicide programs have proven to be effective in managing this disease and protecting yield. Spraying at the flowering stage will give the best protection. With the likelihood of an outbreak so low in our area it is not recommended that a preventative spray be used but that producers be aware of the possibility of the disease and that if spotted growers act quickly to apply a spray to control the disease. Early detection through careful scouting is the first important step.

Asian soybean rust is not easy to identify and can be mistaken for other diseases. Early symptoms appear as yellowish mosaic discolourations on the upper surface of leaves deep in the lower canopy. As the disease progresses infected leaves turn yellow and brown and tiny reddish volcano-like pustules appear on the bottom of the leaves. Infected plants drop their leaves resulting in less pod set or pod fill, depending on when the disease occurs. Plants can become defoliated in as little as 10 days. If you suspect an infection, give us a call so it can be identified.

We will be surveying soybean fields in the province in mid August with Rick Delbridge, Delbridge Disease Management, looking for signs or symptoms of this disease.

Corn Kernels

Poncho 250 and Corn Pest

In research trials, both in Canada and the USA, Poncho has been shown to be very effective in providing contact and systemic protection against wireworm, black cutworm, seedcorn maggot and white grub in corn. The low rate of Poncho, Poncho 250, gives early season protection, up to the 4 or 5 leaf stage of development, while the higher rate, Poncho 1250, will give better protection longer.

Following a small number of complaints from local growers both in 2004 and again this year; some questions have been raised locally concerning the effectiveness of using the low rate of Poncho, Poncho 250, to control black cutworm in no-till corn or control wireworm damage under heavy wireworm pressure.

Tim Moyes, Bayer Crop Science, suppliers of Poncho has been made aware of the concerns. Tim says that Poncho 250 seed treatment has performed very well across the country and that the incidences of poor control are only a few and isolated to our area. Local experience would indicate that the lower rate of Poncho is not always effective in controlling wireworm or black cutworm. That under heavy wireworm pressure or for protection against black cutworm in no-till corn a safer option would be Poncho 1250. AgraPoint put a couple of trials out on farm this spring to compare the effectiveness of Poncho at the mid and high rates to non-treated seed to control wireworms. Data from these trials will be available this fall.

Predicting Silage Corn Harvest Dates

Much of this year's corn crop was seeded two to four weeks later than normal. The recent warm weather has done a lot to move the crop along. Heat is what drives the growth and development of the corn plant from seeding to silking. Silking date is the first indicator for predicting when the crop will be ready for harvest. Whereas the time it takes for a crop to reach silking varies significantly with weather and between hybrids, the length of time between silking and black layer is much more uniform and averages 55 to 60 days. Silage harvest usually begins shortly after half-milkline. The half-milkline stage occurs 13 days prior to black-layer or about 42 to 47 days after silking. Using calendar dates is only an indicator for planning purposes. The weather has a significant influence on the rate of drydown and the actual start of silage harvest. Wet cool weather will slow drydown of the kernel while hot dry weather will speed things up. And of course a frost changes everything.

Keeping Crows off of Plastic Wrap and Tubes

Most farmers storing corn or forage in plastic tubes or wrap are aware of how much damage a few crows can cause. A Pictou County farmer has a simple solution. He says crows can be kept off plastic wrap and tubes with some strategically placed pieces of surveyor's tape. Every 10 meters simply tape two short pieces of orange surveyors tape to the top of the bales or pile and the crows will stay away. The pieces of surveyor's tape should be around 60 cm long and be taped down at one end using patching tape so that they blow in the wind like flags.

Forage Comments

submitted by Daniel Scothorn, AgraPoint Ruminant Specialist

At the AgriFest site we harvested alfalfa at four different cutting dates this spring. The results were not surprising, but the negative impact of feeding late cut forages have to be considered. A lot of first cut haylage in Nova Scotia was harvested later in June than usual, resulting in high fibre and possibly low protein! How will this impact on your cow herd?

1. High fibre will reduce forage intake and milk yield. A cow eats a fixed amount of forage fibre each day. This means that low fibre forage (ADF below 30%) can improve intake dramatically compared to high fibre forage. Lactating cows can consume 18 kg DM of this June 13th AgriFest alfalfa compared to 12 kg DM of the June 20th alfalfa.

2. High fibre will increase butterfat percent. High fibre diets increase ruminal pH, usually resulting in higher butterfat percent of milk. This will decrease your SNF:BF ratio. However, high fibre forage will probably reduce the butterfat yield per cow, a direct result of feeding low TDN forage. A large drop in milk yield from feeding high fibre forage will not fully compensate for the higher butterfat percent, and you may have to milk more cows to achieve quota requirements.

Cut Date	CP	ADF	NDF	TDN
June 2	26	29	38	67
June 7	22	29	38	67
June 13	23	33	40	65
June 20	15	43	58	55

3. Low energy will reduce milk yield. This is nothing new…high fibre forage produces lower milk yield. The AgriFest June 2nd, 7th, and 13th alfalfa will produce substantially more milk than the June 20th cutting.

Feeding more fat, more grain or more corn silage will partially alleviate reduced milk yield from high fibre forage. As an alternative, milk more cows and accept the lower milk yield that mid to late June haylage may bring.