

NC STATE

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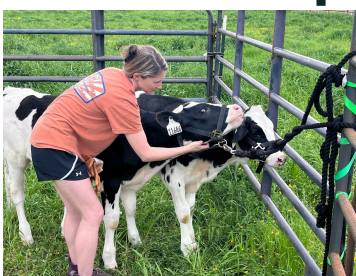
Agricultural News From Craven County ExtensionMike Carroll <mike_carroll@ncsu.edu>
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NC STATE EXTENSION

NC Cooperative Extension, Craven Center

Agricultural Update



April 2025

In this Newsletter.....**Upcoming Events****Stripe Rust and Head Scab in Wheat****Why Subsoil Moisture is a Real Concern****Ongoing Drainage & Irrigation Studies: On-Farm Visits from NCSU Faculty****Thrip Management for Cotton and Tobacco****Planting Soybeans Early****NC Farm Helpline**

Important Note: Registration deadline for events listed below will vary from as few as 24 hours prior the event to as much as 3-4 days prior the event so please register as much in advance as possible. Also, while attendance is open to anyone, meals, when served, will only be provided for those that register in advance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NCDA & CS Pesticide Exam - On June 11, 2025, the NCDA & CS will offer pesticide exams at the Craven County Agricultural Building beginning at 1 pm. Register online [HERE](#). Additional dates and locations can be found at the [NCDA & CS webpage](#).



Stripe Rust and Head Scab in Wheat

Stripe rust has been confirmed in wheat in several counties so continue to monitor for this disease. If the variety has resistance, then it highly likely that no action is needed. If the variety is susceptible continue to monitor. Treatments options will vary depending upon anticipated harvest date. Specific products are listed in the article, [Disease Identification & Management](#).

Fusarium Head Blight or Scab is another disease to monitor. Rainfall and higher temperatures at bloom or shortly thereafter increase the likelihood of this disease. If you note 10% of wheat heads that look bleached or with a slightly pink color, this is an indicator that this disease was not managed well. Toxins in the harvested wheat can lead to severe dockage. One aid, should you note this, is to increase the fan speed when harvesting. The theory is that these infected seeds are much lighter than non-infected seeds so increasing the fan will blow these lighter

seeds out the back of the combine rather than into the hopper. Additional notes and a short 5 minute video is located at the article just mentioned above.

Why Subsoil Soil Moisture is a Real Concern

Frequent rainfall has kept wheat growing and early planted crops emerging. However, we have a potential problem. Rainfall to date is 6-8 inches below normal for most of this area. Adequate subsoil moisture is about 36 inches deep or more across most of the state. As such, should we experience extreme heat or more than about 7-10 days with no rainfall, crops may suffer severely simply because we have no real subsoil water reserve for root to rely upon.

To be blunt, there is not a tremendous that we can do about this. However, there is two things that we can manage (besides installing irrigation). First, put in riser boards to capture any rainfall immediately after you plant. If, by chance, it does rain excessively, we can always release the water. If not, then the little water that accumulates may be sufficient for plants during any potential drought periods. (For the immediate forecast, frequent showers are anticipated. We simply don't know what mid-June will provide!)

Secondly, if you have a hard pan, consider deep tillage. In the last newsletter, we discussed the adverse effects of hard pans on crop yield. Some soils will indeed respond to deep tillage but all will not. In fact, some should never have such an operation. Below is a chart of some of the more common soil types in this area and their response to deep tillage.

SOIL SERIES	RIP - NO RIP
Leaf	Avoid!
Rains	Yes
Pantego	Yes
Goldsboro	Yes
Lenoir	Avoid!
Lynchburg	Yes
Craven	Avoid!
Seabrook	Yes
Norfolk	Yes
Altavista	Yes

Ongoing Drainage & Irrigation Studies: On-Farm Visits from NCSU Faculty

So that you aware, NCSU is conducting long-term studies with full farm strategies using irrigation and drainage systems. This will be expanded into eight regions of the state in coming years. These studies hope to determine the realistic optimum corn/soybean yield we can obtain, the return on investments for management systems (fertilizer as example), cost and return on investments in infrastructure of irrigation/drainage systems, and net gain from implementing these systems. Along with this study, members of NCSU hope to visit with farmers across the state to examine the actual farm fields, needs, land ownership, economic situation, potential for flood mitigation, etc. These interview should only take a short time and these folks will begin in May and interview through August. If you would be willing to discuss this type of issue with those from NCSU, please contact me by email at mike_carroll@ncsu.edu or call me at 252-633-1477.

Thrip Management for Cotton and Tobacco

Tobacco crops transplanted around April 20th in the New Bern, NC area will be transplanted during the predicted migration of the third generation of tobacco thrips. Typically, this is when we experience the most Tomato Spotted Wilt (TSW). Transplant with an insecticide treatment and Actigard treatment in the greenhouse are the most protected. If not, there is not anything else we can do other than delay planting until this migration has passed. (Note: It is still unknown whether the recent decreases in TSW incidence over the past few years is simply by chance or related to lesser population of the Western Flower Thrip. It is speculated that the more mobile Western Flower Thrips is more responsible for TSW spread than the Tobacco

Thrip. As such, TSW incidence is assumed to be lower when the population of Western Flower Thrip is lower. Time will tell.) As a last note, this migration is much ahead of "normal". Typically, we've had this migration between May 5-10th each year.

Typically, about a week or so after the 3rd generation of thrips migrate, cotton becomes susceptible. This may be troublesome for us since this may directly coincide with cotton emergence. Seed treatments or in-furrow insecticides will aid but this assumption assumes we have adequate soil moisture for the cotton plants to take up the insecticide. Adding additional uncertainty, the NCSU Cotton Thrip Predictor Tool is not currently working correctly. So, about the only thing we do is scout routinely.

Should thrip exceed an economic threshold on non-ThryvOn varieties (no threshold should be exceeded on these varieties), utilize products that are labeled such as acephate, Exirel, Radiant, Dimethoate and Bidrin. Should you wish to try a new product, Hemi (spinetoram) is available and should provide excellent control when used in conjunction with non-ionic surfactant.

Planting Soybeans Early

Over the years we have finally reached a point where we stop fighting the data and know that soybean can indeed be planted earlier than we have done in the past. Even so, should adverse weather (hot/dry or cold/wet) prevail, damping off disease may prevail. There is no way to forecast which disease may become an issue. As such, an in-furrow fungicide or at least a fungicide seed treatment is strongly recommended if planting soybeans early. Below are some of the most common diseases and symptoms taken from an article written by NCSU Plant Pathologist, Dr. LeAnn Lux

Fusarium root rot is often associated with stressful growing conditions resulting in both pre- and post-emergence damping off, leading to delayed emergence and stunting of infected seedlings. Root rot symptoms typically appear as dark brown discoloration, with lesions extending through the vascular tissue of the hypocotyls, often accompanied with missing lateral roots. Above ground symptoms include chlorosis (yellowing) of cotyledons, and wilting occurring as patches in the field.

Rhizoctonia seedling blight favors warm and moist, but not saturated soils. This disease can cause both pre- and post-emergence damping off with symptoms displaying reddish-brown, sunken lesions that girdle the hypocotyl and lower stem at the soil line, typically appearing in patches or portions of entire rows within the field.

Phytophthora root rot commonly occurs in warm and saturated conditions, typically after heavy rainfalls resulting in standing water. Symptoms of infected plants include mushy, water-soaked stems, wilting, and stunting commonly occurring in low-lying, wet-natured patches within the field.

Pythium seedling blight prefers cool, wet conditions that result in rotten, mushy seeds with poorly developed roots. Above ground symptoms include water-soaked lesions on the hypocotyl and/or cotyledons that often occur in low-lying areas and poorly drained soils.

Read more in her article, [Eager to Plant? What to Know About Soybean Seedling Diseases.](#)



NC Farm Help Line

Tariffs, low economic prices, unpredictable weather, age, labor problems, and many other factors contribute to stress of farming. In fact, whether we like it or not, agriculture has one of, if not the highest, accidental death rates due to equipment use, as well as the highest suicide rate for occupations. Do consider potential impact of things that can be a negative influence on production but please don't worry about things you cannot change! If you find yourself depressed, well, we can listen! If you are not comfortable discussing issues with us, help is available 24/7, through the Help Line that connects individuals experiencing a crisis or in need of other help with resources including mental health, financial, legal, farm safety/health, Cooperative Extension and more at 844-325-3276 or online at

<https://ncfarmstress.org/crisis-and-resource-lines/>. Additionally, for tobacco producers, legal or labor assistance is available free from [GAP Connections](#)

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Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the NC Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any product.

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<https://diversity.ncsu.edu/report-a-concern/>

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