Field Crop Newsletter

September 2009

WHEAT

VARIETY SELECTION
It is certainly early to be thinking about planting wheat. Prime wheat planting dates for Onslow County are November 3-21. However, it seems like seed supplies begin taking orders earlier each year. Last month’s newsletter included a chart of the 2008-2009 Wheat Variety Performances provided by Dr. Randy Weisz and Dr. Christina Cowger at NCSU. The additional information below should be helpful in selecting wheat varieties to plant in 2009.

Grow More Than One Variety
Small grain variety performance can vary greatly from one year to the next. This makes it nearly impossible to pick a single “best” variety. Consequently, producers should plant at least two different varieties every season. Growing at least two varieties will reduce the risk of freeze injury, pest damage and other forms of crop failure and maximize the potential for a high-yielding crop.

Keep Up To Date
Small grain varieties generally have the highest yields during the first couple of years after their release. Consequently, the varieties grown on a farm should change over time. This makes it important to keep up with newly released varieties.

Pick High Yielding Varieties
We recommend selecting varieties that have yielded above average over the past 3 years in the official variety test.

Fine Tune Your Selection
Once you know which varieties have yielded well in your area, select the ones that also have resistance to specific insect and disease pests common on your farm.

Pay Attention To “Heading Date”
“Heading Date” is the best indication of how susceptible a variety is so late Spring freezes. “Early Heading” varieties are the most likely to
suffer yield reductions due to late freezes. If you pick an “Early Heading” variety it is best to plant it a few weeks after the start of the wheat-planting season for your area. This will help it escape freeze damage potential in March and April.

For more information on small grain varieties please pick up a copy of the North Carolina Measured Crop Performance-Small Grains 2009. Copies are available at Shaw Farm Supply in Richlands, Crop Production Services in Maysville, and your local Cooperative Extension Office. Additional information about commercial wheat varieties, and small grain production can be found at: http://www.smallgrains.ncsu.edu

COTTON

DEFOILIATION AIDS
Harvest-aid application decisions are made based on crop maturity, crop condition, weather condition, and desired harvest schedule. Once a producer decides that defoliation is needed, they must determine when the chemical should be applied, what material(s) will be applied, and how much material(s) to apply. Crop condition and air temperatures will largely determine the selection of defoliation materials and rates. Still, desired defoliation materials and rates of application often change during the season with changes in crop condition and weather. In the end, the two most important factors in determining when to defoliate are crop maturity and desired harvest schedule.

There are multiple ways to determine when to spray a defoliant. It is generally safe to defoliate when about 60 percent of the bolls are open. However, this strategy may not work well in situations where the cop is set faster or slower than normal. Another, more effective method that is often used to time defoliation is counting the nodes above cracked boll (NACB). As a general rule, find the uppermost position boll that is cracked and you can see lint, and count to the highest node with a harvestable boll. In most cases, 4 NCAB will normally take 40 to 50 days to mature with warm temperatures. With cooler temperatures, it may take 60 days. Cut some bolls to determine maturity. Bolls are mature if they are hard to cut, the seeds are turning brown, and the fibers will string out. Below is a chart to assist you in your defoliation decisions. Please See Enclosed Chart on next page.

CORN YIELD CONTEST

Just a reminder the 2009 Corn Yield Contest rules and entry forms are located at the Onslow County Extension Office. To be eligible to enter, you must grow one acre or more of corn (No. 2) in North Carolina. Only one entry per farm unit is eligible for an award, but several applications may be submitted if production practices are different. The deadline for entry forms is November 30, 2009. Please call me to set up a time to come out and measure your corn fields for the contest.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Pesticide “V” Training
September 3, 2009
10:00 – 12:00 pm
Jones Co. Cooperative Extension Service
Pesticide “V” and “X” Training
September 24, 2009
“X” starts at 4:00pm
“V” starts at 7:00pm
Duplin Co. Cooperative Extension Service
## HARVEST AID PERFORMANCE FOR COTTON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Estimated minimum temperature</th>
<th>Mature leaves</th>
<th>Juvenile growth</th>
<th>Regrowth prevention</th>
<th>Boil opening</th>
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<td>ET</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Finish</td>
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### The Onslow County Fair Is Coming to Town

The Onslow County Fair will be here October 5th, 2009, through Saturday October 10th, 2009. Crafts, sewing items, baked goods, home canned goods are all needed to be judged. Young and old can enter. Entries to be judged can be entered on October 5th from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm. Some flowers entries may be entered the next morning.

Fair books are available at all branches of the county’s public library or at the Onslow County Extension Office. All entries into the fair for judging have to have been completed within the last year and all participants with items to be entered have to be a resident of Onslow County. A complete listing of all the rules can be found in the fair books. There’s a category for everyone from agricultural exhibits to arts and crafts, to canning and baked goods.

Please join in the fun by entering an item or items into the fair. The money awards are not large, but the ribbons are special.

Tuesday, October 6th, a talent show will be held with youth from all parts of the county. Talent goes on parade at 7:00 pm. We need everyone to get involved with the fair to show those that attend all the talent we have in our county.

The price to get in the fair this year will be $5.00. Children under the age of three get in free as well as seniors age 65 and older get in free. Ride tickets will be sold separately on the midway. The fair opens on October 5th, at 6:00 pm. Through Friday October 9th, at 4:00 pm and Saturday, October 10th, at 12 noon. If you have any questions regarding the entries to the fair or a fair booth, please call us at 455-5873.