

Soybean growing problems discussed

SALISBURY, Md. -- Three different sets of problems must be considered when raising soybeans, says Dr. W.O. Scott, Extension agronomist at the University of Illinois, and they are directly linked to the three growth periods of a soybean: "plant to emergence" "emergence to bloom" and "bloom to maturity."

Speaking at the Delmarva soybean meeting held here earlier this year, Scott brought the expertise of the nation's largest soybean producer - Illinois - to the "largest gathering of soybean growers in the country."

There are two types of soybeans -- determinate and indeterminate - but the problems are roughly the same for both of them. The determinate soybean does not bloom until it reaches full height, whereas the indeterminate soybean blooms and keeps right on growing.

Scott warns farmers to "know something about the vigor of the seed before you plant it." He says that during this first stage of growth -- "plant to emergence" -- the farmers should check out the root system as well as the top of the plant, if problems should arise. Difficulties at this time would probably be associated with a too-deep planting or the bean breaking its neck emerging from the soil crust.

"Even if you have a poor stand of soybeans, don't tear them up unless the showing is 25 to 50 per cent below optimum," states Scott. "The soybean's ability to

recover is good. If it's still early in the season, you won't lose much and probably will not have to replant.

White grubs and other pests begin attacking the plant during the "emergence to bloom" stage. And there is the added threat of flooding during the late spring-early summer rains. But there is little danger of herbicide injury as only pre-emergence herbicides have been used thus far and the root system grow laterally from the treated soil very quickly at this point.

"Low yields during this stage are generally due to cultivation being too deep or too late," says Scott. "By mid-July, the beans should cover the inter-row spacing."

The major factor during the "bloom to maturity" stage is day length. Once the plant has bloomed, however, the effects of hail injury are much more critical. At this time, the soybeans are subject to leaf damage caused by cabbage loopers and green clover worms. Other hard-to-control pests are the soybean root knot nematode, bacterial postule (leaf mildew and downy mildew), charcoal rot, stem canker and bud blight.

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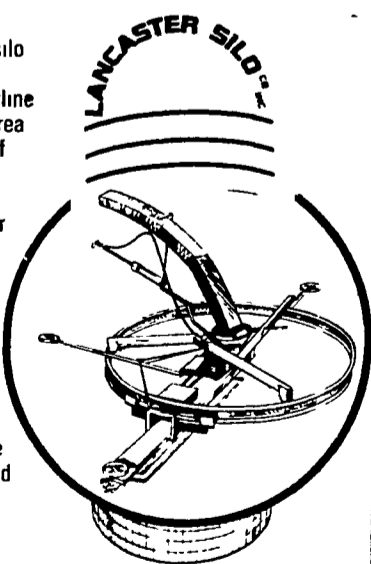
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