

# Scout early for anthracnose signs

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Periods of extended rainy weather in the spring and fall are the most likely times for anthracnose to strike. It stands to reason that those are also the best times to be in your corn fields checking for the presence of the disease.

Anthracnose is becoming an increasingly significant disease in the eastern Corn Belt. It has been identified in states east of the Mississippi River, the central Corn Belt

and in the southern areas of Michigan.

Caused by the fungus, *Coletotricum graminicola*, anthracnose ranks along with *Diplodia* and *Gibberella* stalk rot as some of the most economically important of the reoccurring corn diseases.

The anthracnose fungus may first attack seedlings in the spring, when the plants are about six inches tall, according to Mike Turner, manager of pathology and

entomology research for Funk Seeds International. This leaf-blighting stage of anthracnose appears as yellow or yellow-bordered lesions of one-quarter to one-half inch in diameter, generally on the lower leaves.

"These early lesions do not cause much economic damage," says Turner, "because they are not as important to photosynthate production. However, if wet weather persists throughout the summer, anthracnose can also persist, causing some decrease in yield."

This does not occur very frequently, he adds.

But the presence of earlier lesions can spell trouble later in the season as they create a stress on the plant.

When the weather turns damp again in the early fall, anthracnose sometimes manifests itself through top lodging. Often confused with corn borer feeding, anthracnose can be distinguished by the narrow, vertical or oval lesions on the stalk rind.

These lesions are tan to reddish-brown, turning dark brown or black with age. The lesions can grow together, producing large blotchy areas.

According to Turner, an early infection of anthracnose often weakens the plant, opening it to other

stalk rot organisms which can choke off the plant's ability to translocate nutrients to the ear.

The disease, when combined with other diseases in the stalk rot complex, can also cause serious lodging problems.

The disease is fast-acting, says Turner, who points out the importance of frequent scouting for the disease in the fall.

The most effective control for anthracnose is planting resistant hybrids, according to Turner.

"We inoculate our breeding lines with anthracnose, and those which appear particularly susceptible are eliminated from further hybrid consideration," he says.

Funk conducts anthracnose screening programs at several locations in the areas where the disease is most troublesome.

"While we have some hybrids that are more resistant than others, I'm not aware of anyone who has a hybrid that is totally immune," he says. Turner suggests that growers consult their seed dealers for recommendations on resistant hybrids adapted to their area.

Turner adds that clean fall plowing provides insurance against the disease because the fungus can overwinter on crop debris. Crop rotation may also reduce the severity of the disease if reduced tillage practices are employed for rolling or hilly topography.

If the disease is identified early in the fall, quick harvest may help minimize losses due to lodging, says Turner.

But he reiterates that resistant hybrids are the best protection against the disease.

"With the testing procedures we use, I feel optimistic about getting ahead of these organisms."

# Berks Co. equine Council to discuss County problems

LEESPORT — On Monday, June 9, the Berks County Equine Council will hold a discussion of county equine problems.

The meeting's agenda includes an update on the Blue Marsh trail system and the Berks County equine directory.

An open-end discussion on the major topics in the equine industry in Berks County will also be on the agenda, such as the trails in

Berks County, Schuylkill River Greenway project, county-wide equine education programs, and the equine industry survey.

Any horse enthusiast is invited to join the discussion and the Equine Council.

For more information on the Berks County Equine Council, contact Clyde Myers, County Agent, Berks County Agricultural Center, Leesport, Pa. 19533 (215-378-1327).

# York schedules canning and freezing classes

YORK — The Extension Service in York County has set up several classes in different areas of the county.

Freezing how to's — Learning the recommended procedure for freezing foods from the garden for best quality will be held June 3 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Red Land Community Center, St. Paul's U.M. Church, Newberrytown; 7:30 p.m. at Shrewsbury Borough Municipal Building; June 4 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Bair; June 5 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Lower Chanceford Township Building; and 7:30 p.m. at Extension Meeting Room, 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York.

Canning Know How — Learning the most up-to-date canning methods. Pressure canners with dial gauges can

be checked free at these demonstrations. Each participant will receive a free canning book. Demonstrations will be held:

June 10 — 7:30 p.m. at Shrewsbury Borough Municipal Building; June 11 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at 4-H Center, Bair; June 12 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Lower Chanceford Township Building; June 17 — 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Red Land Community Center, St. Paul's U.M. Church, Newberrytown; June 19 — 7:30 p.m. at Extension Meeting Room, 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York.

Anyone can attend these classes free. Just register in advance by contacting the York County Extension Office at 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York, PA 17402 or phone 717/757-9657.

# Berks farm contest held

READING — Thirteen members from Berks County FFA Chapters competed in the farm management contest. Each contestant had to figure out different mathematical problems dealing with agriculture. They had to decide what type of equipment should be used for certain practices, and take a

written test about what practices to use on the farm.

Placings of the top six are as follows: 1. Howard Grest III, Twin Valley; 2. Sue Gromis, Conrad Weiser; 3. Tim Stoltzfus, Twin Valley; 4. Tom Kirk, Twin Valley; 5. Bruce Latschaw, Kutztown; and 6. Ernest Gelsinger, Conrad Weiser.



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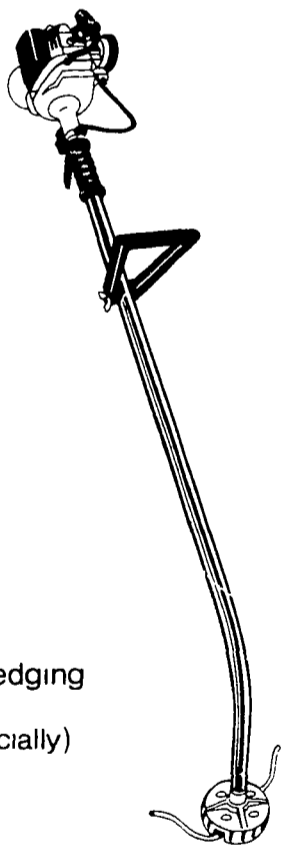
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