

# Powdery mildew is top wheat disease

Powdery mildew is the number one disease of wheat in Pennsylvania, according to H. Cole Jr. Penn State professor of plant pathology.

This statement is based on yield loss data collected over the last five years from research conducted by members of the Center for Cereals Research. The actual losses are affected by the relative resistance or susceptibility of the variety grown, the amount of nitrogen applied to the crop, and the weather conditions.

Growers do have some control over the first two of these factors. It is known that the variety Tyler is extremely resistant to this disease, while Hart is susceptible.

Also, the disease is more severe as more nitrogen is added to the crop.

There is a fungicide that is available for both mildew and leaf rust control. The chemical is triadimefon, a product of the Mobay Corporation and sold under the trade name Bayleton. The use of this chemical should follow some general guidelines for optimum yield benefit. This chemical generally will not provide any economic benefit if the wheat variety is resistant to powdery mildew. Also, application may not be economical under low fertility levels. Spray applications have provided yield increases of up to 22 bushels per acre when used in fields or plots that were being

managed for high yield wheat production.

Even under high yield production programs, the fungicide should not be applied unless disease conditions call for a spray. Growers can make these spray decisions if they can identify mildew lesions on leaves and are familiar with the wheat growth stages. One application of Bayleton at a rate of 4 oz. of product per acre should provide excellent mildew control. It is recommended adding Dithane M-45 (80 WP) at a rate of 2 lb. per acre with the Bayleton as a tankmix. This will suppress Septoria which often moves in on the leaves when mildew is removed.

The wheat plants should be examined at growth stages (GS) 6 through 9 to estimate the amount of mildew in the field. Each examination should consist of looking at 20 main stems per field of 10 acres or less. These stems should be selected at random throughout the field. Larger fields will require more stems to maintain accuracy. At GS 6, every leaf on every plant should be checked for mildew lesions. If more than 50% of all the leaves have mildew, regardless of the amount, this calls for a spray.

If not, evaluate again at GS 7. Here again look at 20 stems but only examine the leaf below the top leaf of the plant. If mildew is

present over more than half of these leaves, a spray would be beneficial. If not, this same procedure is used at GS 8. The final evaluation is made at GS 9. Again look at the leaf below the top leaf. If the mildew is covering more than 10% of the leaf area on half of the leaves examined, a spray may be applied. If not, the disease level generally is not sufficient to cause yield reductions.

Remember that only one spray is necessary during the season, and regardless of the growth stage, once the spray has been applied, no further evaluation is necessary. Remember to follow all precautions on the chemical label and use proper spray techniques. With the use of resistant varieties and fungicides like Bayleton, powdery mildew may hopefully soon be classified as a minor disease in Pennsylvania.

# Wet weather affects vegetable planting

NEWARK, Del. — Cold, wet weather has again delayed vegetable planting on Delmarva this spring. April was very wet, with 4.92 inches recorded for the month on the rain gauge at the University of Delaware Substation near Georgetown. As all vegetable growers know, such rainy spells cause much frustration and complicate the planting season.

"Producers who use plastic mulches for any crops, especially cantaloupes and watermelons, have a hard decision to make, if they can't get into the fields to lay their plastic and plant on it by mid-May," says University of Delaware extension vegetable specialist Ed Kee. "If these crops go in later than May 15, will the plastic provide enough earliness to justify the extra expense?"

Even with plastic, he says delayed plantings may not mature before the season's main harvest. "Once prices usually drop as the season progresses, this could negate the price advantage plastic usually gives. On the other hand, the good weed control and better soil moisture conservation plastic provides may still warrant its use.

Pea growers have also been seriously affected by the wet spring weather, Kee reports. The

cooler temperatures delayed planting, and peas usually have more weed problems during a wet spring. He recommends using dinitro as a post-emergent treatment. This should still do a good job on young broadleaved weeds, and a fair one on young grasses.

The specialist advises growers to scout fields so they know where the weed pressure is. As temperatures rise, reduce herbicide rates as indicated on the label. Spray after two or three days of sunny weather to allow pea plants to harden up. This will reduce the chance of injury. Kee says Basagran is also available for use on this crop, but offers no particular advantage over dinitro.

Though it's usually not wise to plant peas after April 30, some years this can't be avoided. Late planted peas will be susceptible to heat and drought stress which can occur in June and early July. "In this case," he says, "the only possible help will be to intensify your irrigation program. Flowering and seed enlargement are the critical periods. Maintaining proper soil moisture levels will help pollinate and fertilize each pea in a pod."

Wet conditions have also frustrated potato growers this spring. As with cantaloupes, late planting has ramifications in the marketplace, since prices tend to decline over the harvest season.

Weed problems seem to multiply with later potato plantings, as they do with peas, because the soil is warmer and weeds germinate faster. The standard program of Lorox at dragoff followed by Eptam at the first cultivation is still a good one, the specialist says, though it's somewhat weak on velvetleaf. Using Sencor after dragoff may help where this weed is a problem. Dual or Lasso may be added with dragoff treatments for extra grass control, but be aware that these chemicals may injure the crop. A post-emergence application of Sencor is possible in a problem field, but may cause some burning or tuber injury. Read labels carefully and spray during bright, sunny weather.



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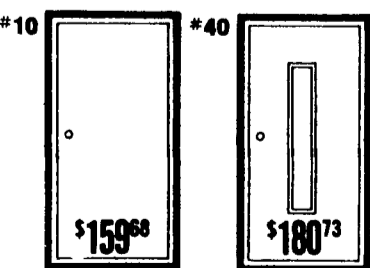
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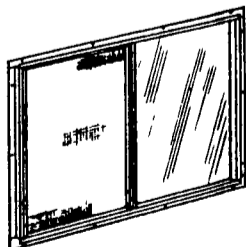
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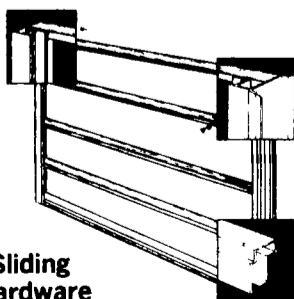
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ARENDSVILLE — Exhibitors wishing to rent spaces at the 1984 South Mountain Fair can now secure a space by forwarding a \$25 deposit, the Fair Association has announced.

Spaces will be rented on a first-come, first-served basis. Charges for the spaces will remain the same as last year with inside spaces renting for \$125 and outside spaces costing \$3.30 per front foot. Inquiries about renting spaces may be sent to South Mountain Community and Fair Association, Arendtsville 17303.

The Fair this year will be held Aug. 30 through Sept. 3, a change from the traditional Labor Day opening. — J.H.

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