

New Website Provides Dairy Checkoff Information

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The American Dairy Association & Dairy Council Mid East recently launched its official dairy farmer Website designed to help dairy farmers and promoters stay up-to-date on their dairy checkoff promotion program.

The site, found at www.adadc-mideast.com, provides information about national and local dairy promotion activities. In the

"About ADADC Mid East" section, dairy farmers can learn about their board of trustees, find answers to frequently asked questions, or obtain background information about the checkoff program.

Visiting the "Checkoff Program Highlights" section offers farmers an overview of dairy promotion efforts in areas such as milk, cheese, export and nutri-

tion marketing. Visitors are encouraged to browse this site for frequent program updates.

Included in the "Useful Resources" section are dairy promotion tips and downloadable promotion resources such as coloring sheets, word finds and games. Dairy farmers in the ADADC Mid East region can also order promotion materials by simply filling out the online order form.

Links to other useful Websites and a calendar of upcoming dairy promotions/dairy-related events are also included in this site.

ADADC Mid East is the local planning and management organization responsible for increasing demand for U.S.-produced dairy products on behalf of America's dairy farmers. ADADC Mid East works closely with Dairy Management, Inc.,

the national dairy promotion organization, to implement dairy promotion, education and research programs nationwide. The dairy farmer checkoff program funds both organizations.

Since the program began in 1984, dairy promotion programs have helped sell more than 225 billion pounds of total milk above the amount projected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Scouting Is Best Defense Against Potato Leafhoppers In Alfalfa

DES MOINES, Iowa — Potato leafhopper infestation levels in alfalfa fields can vary from year to year. What makes this pest so dangerous is that early symptoms are very subtle and can easily be missed. But producers have a good defense against this costly pest by scouting fields for potato leafhopper activity.

"Potato leafhoppers damage alfalfa plants, reduce yield, lower forage quality and sometimes reduce stand persistence," said Carl Bannon, technical information manager for Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., in Mt. Joy, Pa. "Economic losses from severe leafhopper infestations can reach up to \$50 per acre per cutting or one ton or more per acre a year. Also, potato leafhopper damage can stunt the plants and make them less competitive, allowing weed infestations into the stand. By the time producers see the first signs of damage, which is V-shaped yellowing of the leaves, it's too late to recapture lost yield or quality."

Each year, potato leafhopper frequently causes damage to alfalfa fields from the midwest through the east.

Scouting alfalfa fields with a sweep net is the only effective method of monitoring leafhopper activity. Bannon recommends scouting weekly beginning in late May or early June.

Fields should be scouted at least two to three times before the first cutting. After cutting, once re-growth reaches two- to three-inches, Bannon recommends scouting again for at least three consecutive weeks. New stands of alfalfa are more sensitive to potato leafhopper damage and should have the highest priority for scouting.

Most damage takes place on second and third cuttings after potato leafhopper populations have had a chance to increase. However, new seedlings, which are especially susceptible to leafhoppers because of underdeveloped root systems, may require earlier and more frequent inspection.

To measure leafhopper activity, Bannon says to make 10 sets of sweeps (10 sweeps per set) from different areas of the field. Make sweeps while walking through an area by moving the net from side to side in a sweeping motion

through the foliage. Count both adult and nymph leafhoppers. After each set of sweeps, measure the height of at least two stems in each area. Economic thresholds follow.

If leafhopper numbers are at or above threshold levels, the pest can be managed by cutting immediately, provided the crop is close to the normal harvest time. If threshold levels are present, but the alfalfa isn't ready to harvest, Bannon recommends producers consider applying an insecticide. "A timely treatment will prevent a yield and quality loss, but early detection is essential."

He adds, "If infestations are allowed to continue, yield and quality losses begin to occur. Producers can see significant reductions in crude protein from heavy infestations. Leafhopper damage makes it harder for the alfalfa

plant to survive the winter and can reduce the overall life of the stand."

Potato leafhoppers thrive in dry weather and when temperatures are between 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Growers can also choose to plant alfalfa varieties with resistance to potato leafhopper as another effective way to reduce forage losses to this pest. Research at Iowa State University indicates that in established stands, leafhopper resistant alfalfa varieties may be able to tolerate three to five times higher threshold levels than conventional varieties.

"Overall, solid management and early detection is key to keeping leafhoppers in check

and growing quality alfalfa," says Bannon. "While newer varieties with leafhopper resistance offer improved resistance and yield potential, each grower should assess his or her operation to determine the best approach."

For more specific information on potato leafhopper management and leafhopper resistant alfalfa varieties for your area, contact your Pioneer sales professional.

Stem height (inches)
3
6
8-11
12-14

Leafhoppers/net sweep (average)
0.2 adult
0.5 adult
1.0 adult or nymph
2.0 adults or nymphs



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