## No-Till Farmers: Slugs May Be Abundant This Year

WOOSTER, Ohio - High slug populations may welcome no-till farmers to the start of the growing season.

Ohio State University entomologists have been receiving reports that adult slugs and eggs are present in abundance in some no-till fields throughout western, southern and northeast

"The winter weather was not severe enough to knock out slug populations. Last fall we were finding a lot of slugs in fields and those just carried through winter to lay eggs," said Ron Hammond, an Ohio State entomologist with the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, Ohio. "We fully expect juveniles to be

there this spring.

The juvenile stage of the slug creates the most damage to crops and its voracious appetite can be devastating for farmers who have had a history of slug problems. Upon hatching in mid-to-late May, the slug will begin feeding on anything that is planted in the field, whether it's corn, soybeans or alfalfa. Slug feeding can cause significant reductions in corn yields and total stand loss in soybeans.

Hammond recommends farmers begin scouting their fields now for the presence of adult slugs and eggs to determine their severity and plan appropriate management tactics.

"If farmers easily find slugs and eggs in their fields, the impression we get is that populations will be high. We want them to realize that the potential is there for slugs to be out there,' said Hammond.

He said the best management practice to control slugs is to plant early. "The earlier a farmer can plant his crops the better. The plants have a better chance of outgrowing the damage done by slug feeding if they can get a head start before eggs hatch."

Earlier planted crops like corn usually have the most success in escaping any serious damage from slug feeding. Soybeans, on the other hand, suffer the most damage if germination follows egg hatch.

"Slugs can take out the plant before a grower ever sees the crop," said Hammond.

If soybean farmers are finding a lot of slugs in their fields, are planting in late May or June, and have had a history of stand losses because of slugs, they might want to consider applying a molluscicide at or following planting.

## Delaware Valley College Awarded Webcasting Grant

DOYLESTOWN (Bucks Co.) - Delaware Valley College announced recently it has received a \$113,393 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education which will help train students in real-time livestock monitoring practices. It has also received an additional \$1,400 for related dissemination activities.

Using digital networking technology, the grant will link all of the College's local farms to the classrooms and laboratories. Using the Internet, it will provide students and faculty with access to both real time livestock production/development video and data transmissions and retrievable-on-demand archived



Students and faculty will now be able to view livestock behavior and monitor associated physiological status indicators in real time. The information will also be simultaneously archived for later viewing or analysis.

This video system is necessary since space for large groups of students on the College's farm facilities is limited. The presence of more than a handful of students is also disruptive to the livestock.

Currently, a few movable video cameras are used to record livestock activity and breeding.

The placement of fixed digital video cameras and the wiring for both video and data transmission will permit the yearround, 24/7 observation of livestock by large numbers of students, both on and off-campus, including access by commuter students from their homes. Selected videos and data will also be available to faculty and students at other colleges and universities on the World Wide Web.

For more information, call Robert Nichols at (215) 489-

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