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THE SEED CONSULTANT

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

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DON'T LET SPRING INSECTS TAKE A BITE OUT OF PROFITS

By Jordan Bassler
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As spring planting approaches, farmers face the annual challenge of managing pests that can significantly affect corn yield. Understanding key early-season pests' behavior and damage patterns can help you identify problems early and take steps to safeguard your crops. Before heading to the fields this season, talk to your local Seed Consultants sales representative. Many trait packages can help to proactively manage some of the most common spring insects with in-plant protection to safeguard your yield potential.

WIREWORMS

Wireworms are one of the earliest pests to emerge in spring. These hard-bodied, orange, or bronze-colored insects are often found in soils with high organic matter, especially in fields with a history of manure application. They thrive in cool soils but move deeper into the soil profile as temperatures rise. Wireworms bore holes in seeds, causing seedlings to shrivel and die. You need to dig into the soil around affected plants to spot them. Their peak activity occurs from April to June.

While wireworm damage isn't always widespread, it's critical to monitor fields early, particularly if you've had issues in the past. Seed treatments and in-furrow insecticides can offer protection in fields prone to wireworm infestations.

BLACK CUTWORMS

Black cutworms are a consistent challenge in corn production. These dark-bodied worms are aptly named for their ability to "cut" through young corn plants just above the soil surface, causing plants to be toppled over. The damage resembles a clean cut from scissors and typically occurs between emergence and the V2-V3 growth stages. These pests are active from April to June, with damage often concentrated in areas with dense residue or grassy weeds.

Since black cutworms can strike quickly, scouting regularly during early growth stages is

essential. Spotting damage early allows you to make informed decisions about replanting or managing future infestations.

SLUGS

Slugs present a unique challenge because they are not insects; they are soft-bodied mollusks and not susceptible to Bt proteins that control many above-ground insects. They thrive in heavy crop residue, wet, cool conditions and are most active at night. During the day, slugs hide under the soil or emerge after sunset to feed on corn plants, leaving behind a skeletonized appearance on the leaves, with portions chewed away and stringy lines of damage remaining.

Slugs are most problematic from April to mid-June, although wet years can extend their activity well into the growing season.

Fields with high moisture levels or heavy residue are particularly susceptible to slug damage. Although slug bait products are available, their effectiveness is often limited. Practices like tillage can potentially dry out the soil surface and may help reduce slug feeding and/or pressure. However, consult with your agronomist for tailored solutions if you face significant slug pressure.

WHITE GRUBS

White grubs, the larval stage of beetles like Japanese beetles, live beneath the soil surface and feed on seeds and seedlings. They are especially troublesome in fields where seed trenches are poorly sealed. Damage from white grubs can also indicate potential beetle issues later in the season, such as silk clipping that impacts pollination—white grub activity peaks from April to June.

To minimize damage, ensure proper seed trench closure during planting. Insecticide seed treatments can also protect your crop by targeting grubs in their larval stage.

ARMYWORMS

Although less frequently discussed, armyworms can be among the most destructive pests if left unchecked. These tan-striped worms earn their name from their army-like behavior: They move in groups and consume whatever plant foliage is in their path. Armyworms hibernate in grassy areas near the edges of fields, often beginning their feeding there before advancing into the fields. Feeding typically occurs in whorl-stage corn and can completely defoliate parts of a field if their activity isn't detected early on. Late-planted fields and late-maturing varieties are more susceptible to damage.

Consistent scouting is crucial, particularly along field edges near grassy ditches or hayfields. Spotting issues early enables you to take measures before substantial damage happens.

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DON'T LET SPRING INSECTS...

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Identifying and addressing pest issues early in the spring is essential for protecting corn yield. Preventive measures, such as traits, seed treatments, and in-furrow insecticides, can help manage many of these pests.

Seed Consultants now offers PowerCore Enlist® Refuge Advanced® corn to battle above-ground pests and Vorceed® Enlist® corn to combat pests below ground. PowerCore Enlist® Refuge Advanced® corn has three modes of action for enhanced control over the toughest pests, including European corn borer, fall armyworm, southwestern corn borer, and corn earworm.

Vorceed® Enlist® corn hybrid delivers control of corn rootworm threats through three Bt proteins, offering different modes of action against key root-feeding pests like rootworms.

If you're uncertain about pest activity in your fields or need advice on control options, don't hesitate to contact your local agronomist or seed representative. With careful planning and monitoring, you can reduce the impact of these pests and set your crop up for a successful season.

For a list of references, contact info@seedconsultants.com.

Many trait packages can help to proactively manage some of the most common spring insects with in-plant protection to safeguard your yield potential.

E IS THE KEY

UNLOCK SIMPLE SOLUTIONS. Enlist E3® soybeans from Seed Consultants feature outstanding agronomic improvements over established lines and are specifically developed to excel in the unique soils and conditions of the eastern Corn Belt. Let our elite Seed Consultants brand Enlist E3® soybeans and agronomic support simplify your soybean production this year.

Contact your local Seed Consultants sales professional or visit SeedConsultants.com

Enlist E3® SOYBEANS

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Simply Better

DIAGNOSING SOYBEAN SEEDLING DISEASES

By J.D. Bethel, CCA
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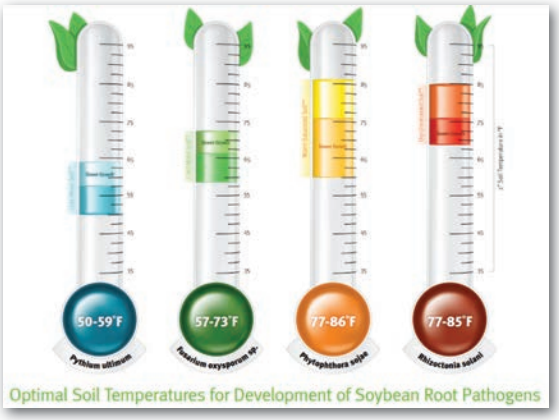
Soybean emergence concerns are one of the most common issues that require an agronomist to visit fields in the spring. In the eastern Corn Belt, there are 4 primary soybean seedling diseases to be aware of: Pythium, Fusarium, Phytophthora, and Rhizoctonia. These soybean pathogens develop across a range of temperature and soil conditions that will be detailed below. I will group them into two main categories for this article, cool temperature seedling disease, and warm temperature seedling diseases.



Optimal Soil Temperatures for Development of Soybean Root Pathogens

COOL TEMPERATURE SEEDLING DISEASES

Pythium is an oomycete, or water mold, that primarily infects plants in saturated soils with temperatures below 60F. Low lying areas of fields that receive high amounts of rainfall in a short period of time are highly susceptible to pythium infection.

Infected seeds will rot and show water-soaked lesions. Infected seedlings will display water-soaked lesions on the hypocotyl and cotyledons before beginning to rot.

Pythium species will overwinter in both corn and soybean residue. Management considerations for pythium include crop residue management, installing drainage tile to decrease saturated soils, fungicide seed treatment, and planting into dry, warm soils. Please note that some pythium species have been found to be resistant to the seed treatment metalaxyl.

Fusarium root rot is another cool temperature seedling disease in soybeans. Fusarium is a fungus with over 12 species that can infect soybeans and cause root rot in seedlings.

Infection occurs in saturated soils with temperatures from 57-73F. Infected plants often display uneven emergence with seedlings looking

stunted and will die by damping off. Infected roots are often dry and brown.

Incidences of fusarium root rot can be reduced by planting soybeans into dry, warm soil conditions. Fungicide seed treatment with an effective active ingredient against fusarium species is very effective at controlling the disease.

WARM TEMPERATURE SEEDLING DISEASES

Phytophthora is a water mold that only affects soybeans and is one of the leading causes of soybean seedling death in our territory. Soybean death is not limited to cotyledon stage seedlings and can occur in plants at all stages of growth.

Phytophthora infection occurs in warm, saturated soils with soil temps between 77-86F. Early season symptoms include rotting seed prior to emergence and damping off for small seedlings. Mid-to-late season symptoms include water-soaked stems and brown lesions on the lower part of the stem. These brown lesions will eventually girdle the plant causing it to die.

Management of phytophthora in soybean fields requires multiple plans of action. When selecting soybean varieties, pick varieties that have one or more Rps genes and a high field rating for phytophthora resistance.

Fungicide seed treatments with an effective active ingredient can be very effective at controlling early season phytophthora infection.

Pythium

Fusarium

Phytophthora


Rhizoctonia

Fields planted to soybeans for multiple years are going to have higher levels of phytophthora in the soil. Crop rotation may be required to help lower the background levels of the disease before planting soybeans again.

Rhizoctonia is the last major soybean seedling disease of note in the eastern Corn Belt. This warm temperature fungus also infects corn, and unlike the other seedling diseases in this article, rhizoctonia infects plants in DRY soil conditions with soil temperature above 77F. This can surprise growers when plants start to die, but their soils are not cold or saturated.

Like the previous diseases on this list, rhizoctonia will kill soybean plants both before and after emergence. Above ground symptoms of rhizoctonia are damping off and stand reduction, which admittedly, looks very similar to other diseases on this list. Rhizoctonia can be differentiated from these other diseases by identifying the red to brownish-red sunken lesions that occur on the hypocotyl or at the soil line on the stem.

Management of rhizoctonia is best achieved through the use of an effective seed applied fungicide seed treatment. Crop rotation is not an effective management tool due to the occurance of rhizoctonia in corn, alfalfa, and cereal grains.

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For John Deere Financial customers with current special terms balances at or near their credit limit, they may have an option to enable their seed purchase now and lock in their order. Contact your SCI Seedsman for details.

	DISCOUNT SCHEDULE	
Finance Plan	**John Deere Financial**	**RABO**
Purchase & Approval Date	Fixed 0%	Fixed 0%
April 2025	0.0%	0.0%
May 2025	0.0%	0.0%
In Season	0.0%	0.0%

PRODUCT USE GUIDE

Part of growing healthy crops is making sure they are protected with the right products. Visit the product page on our website to view our product use guide for information about insect control and herbicide tolerance to support technologies in our seed.

UNIFORM EMERGENCE IN CORN

By Matt Hutcheson, CCA
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Two aspects of stand establishment often discussed by agronomists are emergence and seed spacing. “Picket fence” spacing in corn helps plants grow efficiently and minimizes competition between them. Uniform spacing is an important part of stand establishment. More importantly, however, is uniform emergence. Plants that are just 1 leaf collar behind (due to uneven emergence) significantly reduce yield. According to Paul Jasa, University of Nebraska Extension ag engineer, “When a plant develops ahead of its neighbor, it hurts yield dramatically. It’s going to vary somewhat from year to year, but a plant lagging behind those around it becomes a weed.” To achieve uniform emergence, consistent planting depth is critical.

Field conditions, gauge wheel settings, unit down pressure, and planter speed all affect seeding depth. Set planter depth and check it regularly. A planter may have enough weight to apply the proper down force when full, but what about when it’s almost empty? If it is a model with center fill hoppers, is there enough weight on the ends? Additional weight may need to be added. Keep in mind, too much down pressure and planting in “marginal” or wet conditions can result in sidewall compaction of the seed trench, which will hinder root development and negatively impact yield.

Ground speed can greatly impact planter performance. Planting too fast may cause units to bounce, resulting in uneven seeding depth. Planter units and seed tubes are designed for accuracy at certain speeds. For example, if a planter is designed to drop seed correctly at 5 mph, planting at 6 mph will reduce the accuracy of seed spacing and can result in seed bounce, as well as seed placement on the side of seed trench instead of at the bottom. Following the equipment manufacturer’s recommendations and planting at the appropriate speed will improve the accuracy of plant spacing and depth.

Yields can be severely affected by late emerging plants. In a publication called, “Uneven Emergence in Corn,” The University of Wisconsin has documented as much as a 9% decrease in yield when 25% of corn plants were delayed a week and a half in emerging. Because emergence is so critical to yield, it is important that corn growers set up, adjust, and operate their planters to ensure uniform seed placement and even emergence this spring.

SEED CONSULTANTS 2025 REPLANT AND RETURN GUIDELINES

All replant paperwork must be received into the office by July 1, 2025.

Growers must contact and allow the seedsmen to assess the stand and approve all replant.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

-No replant credit, if seed is planted prior to local insurance dates.

-Must replant in 2025; no credit for 2026.

-Delivered replant seed is subject to a delivery charge.

-Subject to product availability.

-Subject to change without prior notice.

SOYBEANS

- Grower must allow enough time for planted beans to emerge
- No replant if seed is still viable
- Lumigen FST/IST (Inoculated)... 100% replant
- Lumigen Base...75% replant
- Untreated...0% replant

CORN

- All traited hybrids...100% replant
- All treated hybrids...100% replant
- Organic...0% replant
- Replant of replant 1/2 of list price

2025 SEED CONSULTANTS RETURN GUIDELINES

No return on treated soybeans.

Growers may return untreated soybeans to your seedsmen, area warehouse, or dealer.

No corn returns will be accepted after June 25, 2025.

No soybean returns will be accepted after July 18, 2025.

If you have seed returns, contact your seedsmen or your local dealer before the return/replant deadlines.

Seed Consultants soybeans are covered under multiple patents that are still enforced. Please adhere to SCI guidelines and avoid pirated bin run issues.

LEADER UPDATE

By Daniel Call, CCA
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Here we stand again, facing the start of another growing season. There is always a significant amount of both optimism and anxiety this time of year. With the difficult commodity prices we currently have, every decision you make in regards to your upcoming crop is extremely critical to drive profitability. This time of year, I think back to the important lessons we've learned in the past to help guide us through the busy spring season.

Key lessons from previous years which seem to always pay dividends:

1. It's better to stay at home versus planting the day before a big rain.

2. Uniform planting depth and spacing are imperative to raise big yields.

3. Paying attention to the little details at planting time pays huge dividends. Make sure to constantly monitor equipment and planting conditions.

4. Being patient during stand establishment through difficult springs typically works in our favor and allows us to make better replant decisions. Thorough stand counts, combined with using university replant tables to determine replant needs helps us to make the best unbiased decisions.

Although we have no idea what obstacles we may experience this growing season, Seed Consultants has worked diligently to identify and advance products which exhibit outstanding stress tolerance and key agronomic characteristics suited to handle our customers' unique growing environments. Combining these outstanding agronomics with excellent seed treatments gives our customers protection regardless of what the upcoming growing season brings. Our new advancement class this spring continues to reinforce these advantages. We are excited to get these new products in the field.

Another item you need for a successful spring is support. Seed Consultants will be there for you this spring should you have additional seed needs. We have a good supply across most traits and maturities to fulfill your in-season needs. Contact your Seed Consultants sales representative and allow us to deliver your additional seed needs giving you one less thing to worry about this spring.

We thank you for your business and look forward to a successful 2025 planting and harvest. Lastly, we ask that each of you have a safe spring. Be careful and take time during the spring rush to ensure you and those around you are safe. Wishing you all a bountiful 2025 growing season!

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Don't miss a thing

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