



Northern New York Agricultural Development Program News

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Link: www.nnyagdev.org/index.php/2014/06/04/nny-corn-soybean-disease-survey-2nd-year-underway/

NNY Corn and Soybean Disease Survey 2nd Year Underway

Northern New York – Common, emerging and re-emerging crop diseases are a threat to two of the economically-important crops in Northern New York, so a team of Cornell University faculty and Cornell Cooperative Extension educators with Northern New York Agricultural Development Program (NNYADP) funding are now in the second year of a survey of corn and soybean fields in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties.

This proactive disease assessment will help protect the health and profitability of corn and soybean production in Northern New York. The two crops combined are estimated to have a more than \$106 million economic impact in the region.

“New diseases arise and formerly minor diseases become more damaging on a regular basis in stressful environments due to soil and climate conditions and other factors,” says project leader Cornell Plant Pathologist Gary C. Bergstrom, “This assessment and mapping project will help growers make informed management decisions.”

“By conducting an informed survey we will be better able to understand where and to what degree diseases exist across the Northern New York region,” says NNY Regional Field Crops and Soils Specialist Kitty O'Neil with Cornell Cooperative Extension.

“We are constantly watching for new diseases that we know exist elsewhere in New York state. For example, gray leaf spot has become a highly damaging disease of corn in the humid valley areas of the New York Southern Tier and Hudson Valley areas. There are similar environments in Northern New York and we are assessing the potential for gray leaf spot occurrence here,” says Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County Field Crops Specialist Mike Hunter.

The NNYADP has posted the early results of the first-year survey in 2013 on its website at www.nnyagdev.org. First-year plant samples from 14 sentinel fields of corn and 10 sentinel fields of soybeans on Northern New York farms were tested by the Bergstrom Lab at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

One corn disease and four soybean diseases were identified in the field samples.

Northern corn leaf blight was widespread but late-arriving and so significant yield loss was unlikely. The research team is urging growers, however, to plant corn hybrids with moderate resistance to the disease in 2014. Some brown mid-rib corn hybrids showed severe damage in 2013, so 2014 plantings may warrant fungicide application.

Bacterial pustule, white mold, brown spot and downy mildew were seen in some soybean fields but did not show significant disease development. The 2014 survey will, however, be watchful for white mold persistence.

Bergstrom notes, "Each crop disease has its own favorite growing conditions, so multi-year surveys better capture the reality of disease occurrence in a region due to variations in weather year-to-year."

A major benefit of this project will be to increase grower knowledge of crop diseases such as leaf blights, ear rots, and stalk rots in corn, and foliar blights, stem rots, pod rots, viruses and other systemic diseases in soybeans.

Results will be posted periodically on the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program website at www.nnyagdev.org and will be available from CCE offices.

The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program provides practical, on-farm research, technical assistance, and outreach on a diverse range of crops to farmers in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. Learn more about agriculture in Northern New York and find NNYADP project results at www.nnyagdev.org. -30-

PHOTO:

All ages participate in this scouting workshop in a southern Jefferson County soybean field in 2011.

