



## CROP ALERT

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### Slugs in Corn and Soybeans

Slug damage has been very evident in corn and soybeans this week particularly in no till fields. The delayed emergence and slow growth are more favorable for the feeding slugs. Slugs remove long thin pieces of the leaf and usually leave behind a shiny residue as a remainder of their slime trail, *Figure 1*. Slugs are mainly nocturnal and can be found hiding under the crop residue close by during the day. We have been finding mainly the black slug and a few gray ones. Scouting is best done at night when they reveal themselves. Thresholds are mainly based on crop injury. As growing conditions improve, the crop can normally outgrow the feeding slugs. However, if cool, moist and cloudy conditions persist and the crop just sits there, slugs will prevail. Beans are usually hit harder because the growing points are all above ground. We have a couple of effective control options. A metaldehyde bait such as Deadline MP's has shown to be very effective but is sometimes hard to acquire, not easy to calibrate and spread at the proper rate, and will cost about \$22/acre. The other option is Lannate. This is a fairly new label for use on slugs in NY. Growers who have tried it have had mixed results. The key seems to be that it needs to be applied directly to the slugs. This means a nighttime application when the slugs are active.

*Figure 1: Slug Damage in Corn*



*Source: Mike Stanyard*

### Winter Wheat & Malting Barley Head Emergence

The winter wheat & malting barley crops are progressing quickly, *Figure 2*. Most of our wheat ranges from the swollen head visible in the boot (Feekes 10), the awns sticking out of the boot (Feekes 10.1) and heads emerged out of the boot (Feekes 10.5). Once the heads fully emerge, flowering will occur in 3 to 5 days. Much of the winter malting barley is already pollinating. The main stem will be a day or two ahead of the tillers. If you plan on putting on a fungicide for head scab, it is time to spray the winter malting barley and to get ready to spray the winter wheat. Flowering will be occurring by Monday in some of these later fields. The first flowers will emerge in the middle of the head and work their way to the top and bottom of the head. To protect against head scab the goal is to protect as many flowers as possible. The risk for scab is low right now

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but unfortunately there is rain forecast for early next week.

*Below are Dr. Gary Bergstrom's comments for Fusarium head blight control.*

The next 14 days will be critical for farmers making fungicide spray decisions for suppression of Fusarium head blight (FHB) and

protection of flag leaves from foliar diseases. The triazole products **Caramba and Prosaro** are the most effective fungicides for suppression of FHB and deoxynivalenol (DON) toxin contamination when applied at wheat flowering (emergence of anthers on heads) or at full head emergence in barley (anthers begin to appear on barley before heads emerge from the boot). A flowering application of triazole fungicide should be based on Fusarium head blight (FHB) risk as well as the risks of powdery mildew, rust, and fungal leaf blotches in the upper canopy based on scouting of individual fields. There is an application window of approximately 5-6 days from the beginning of flowering in which reasonable FHB suppression can be expected. Fungicide products containing strobilurins should not be applied to headed wheat or barley as they may result in increased levels of DON in grain. While the current risk of FHB epidemics is low to moderate over most of the state, that risk could increase with warming temperatures and scattered storms forecast for the first half of next week. Check the Fusarium Risk Assessment Tool (<http://www.wheatcab.psu.edu/>) and your local weather forecast frequently as your crop approaches flowering.

*Figure 2 Wheat & Malting Barley Head Emergence*



*Source: Mike Stanyard & Bill Verbeten*

*Figure 3: Soybeans on the Surface*



*Source: Bill Verbeten*

### **Check Your Planters & Shallower Tillage**

We know everyone is trying to get planting done in a hurry, but take 5 minutes to get down off your tractors and check to make sure your planters are not leaving seed on the surface, *Figure 3*, and the closing wheels are doing a good job. Minor adjustments can make all the difference and no one can afford to replant this season. If you are still tilling you may need to run your zone builders, plows, or other implements a little shallower to avoid the wetter subsoil layers. Take care to not bury your equipment in the field. There have been plenty of folks who've lost valuable time pulling equipment out of fields that should have been left alone for another few days.