

## CROP ALERT

May 20, 2016

Mike Stanyard, Regional Agronomist, Cornell Cooperative Extension

### Wheat and Barley Update – Gary Bergstrom

Most winter malting barley fields from Niagara Falls to the Hudson Valley are in the boot to heads fully emerged stages. Despite the common dogma that anthers begin to be extruded on barley heads before the heads emerge, we are finding that the majority of just emerged winter barley heads in New York aren't showing anthers until a few days after emergence under our unseasonably cool conditions. Temperature and variety play a more important role in anther development than I previously realized. Still, based on the preponderance of experimental evidence, the best time to apply triazole fungicides for Fusarium head blight (FHB) and deoxynivalenol (DON) mycotoxin suppression is within a few days after full head emergence. We have observed low levels of powdery mildew, spot blotch, scald and trace levels of barley leaf rust in New York. This will be a critical week for foliar fungicide application to barley and I urge close observation of crop development and weather forecasts.



*Barley head flowering.*

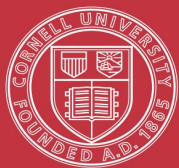
Winter wheat in New York is at stem elongation to flag leaf visible stages, so flowering is still about two weeks off. The triazole products Caramba and Prosaro are the most effective fungicides for suppression of FHB and DON contamination when applied at flowering (emergence of anthers on heads). A 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. We have observed low levels of powdery mildew, *Septoria tritici* spot, and trace levels of wheat leaf rust in New York. There is an application window of approximately 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 over most of the state, that risk could increase. Check the Fusarium Risk Assessment Tool (<http://www.wheatcab.psu.edu/>) and your local weather forecast frequently as your crop approaches heading and flowering.

### Receive FHB Alerts by Cell Phone

I will be providing weekly New York commentaries on FHB risk through June. You can subscribe to receive FHB Alerts directly to your Cell Phone ([http://scabusa.org/fhb\\_alert.php](http://scabusa.org/fhb_alert.php)). You can select to receive alerts as:

1. Text Message Alerts,
2. Email Alerts, or
3. both Text and Email Alerts.

To receive alerts for New York, select the Northern Soft Winter Wheat option which provides alerts for MI, NY, WI and VT.



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### Hay Harvest has Begun!

I saw plenty of grass fields down on the ground this week. The alfalfa I looked at was short and but probably will be ready next week. Here are some harvest tips from Dale Dewing, CCE Delaware County.

- **Mow with a 4 in. stubble height** – less chance of soil in the forage, faster grass regrowth, and the little bit of yield you might gain is all low quality stems anyway.
- **Mow in a wide swath** – rapid drying saves sugars, gets forage to proper dry matter faster and gets harvest in faster.
- **Pay attention to forage moisture (aka Dry Matter)** – For bunks, shoot for 35 to 40% DM (65 -60% moisture). For bags a bit dryer and for baleage, between 50 to 60% DM is best.
- **Density matters** – for bunks, make sure you have adequate packing capacity. The faster the silage is coming in the more tons you need on the bunk. For baleage, dryer forage packs better. Make bales as dense as possible.
- **Cover & Wrap quickly** – Get bunks filled and cover as quickly as possible. Wrap bales within 3 to 4 hours. Oxygen is the enemy of good silage. Cover quickly and keep birds and rodents from spoiling the seal.
- **Park the corn planter?** – Unless you have enough labor to two both things at once, getting fist cut done at optimum time will gain you more than you may lose by delaying corn planting. Harvest your core fields at optimum timing and plant corn later.

### Alfalfa Weevil (AW) Feeding

It was easy to find weevil larvae feeding in many of the alfalfa fields I scouted this week. Some were over threshold and since we are probably within a week of harvest, fields could be cut a little early to avoid feeding losses. Look for the shot hole feeding injury on the top leaves. Treatment threshold is 40% tip feeding. Randomly pick 50 stems and count the number with feeding damage. You do not have to actually look for the larvae. If 20 of those 50 stems are positive for damage, you are at 40%. The key is to cut before the AW larvae reach the 4<sup>th</sup> instar. This stage causes 80% of the feeding damage. I was finding mostly 1<sup>st</sup> with some 2nd instar larvae this week. If harvest is further off, an insecticide application may be warranted. If AW larvae are plentiful on the front of the cutter bar, early second cut alfalfa will need to be scouted carefully. I have a crop cam video on how to scout for alfalfa weevil damage, <https://vimeo.com/129583196>.



*Clean stem compared to weevil damaged stem.*

### Spring Safety Reminder

When facing the rush of late spring conditions remember that operators need enough rest to stay safe and productive! To see the rest of the article: <https://www.cvent.com/Pub/eMarketing/Pages/WebEmail.aspx?emstub=b4a59de4-0128-43c8-88f-fa806604b202>