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INSECT, PLANT DISEASE, & WEED SCIENCE NEWS [No. 90-25] [Oct. 19, 1990]

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Insect
Plant Disease
Weed Science NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

No. 90-25 Oct. 19, 1990

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PLANT DISEASE

Fall Pine Needle Drop Often Normal

Every fall the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic receives calls and samples concerning pines which are suddenly losing needles. In most cases, this is a normal condition called fall needle drop. Healthy pines usually retain three to four years of needles. Older needles toward the center of the tree turn brown and are dropped in the fall or spring. On some trees, the needle drop is rapid and dramatic while on others it is more gradual and, hence, less obvious.

A stressed or weakened tree may retain needles from only the last one or two years. In such cases, the tree should be examined closely to pinpoint the cause of excess stress. Mites have been especially heavy on spruce trees, and many evergreens are still showing the effects of the recent drought. Also, check for other insects, diseases, and mechanical injuries.

Cold winter weather will hold insects and diseases in check until spring so treatment now is not effective. A good watering may be beneficial. This is especially true if the area has missed fall rains. Let the garden hose trickle slowly in several locations around the tree. The intent is to soak the soil profile around the tree. Stop if puddling and run-off occurs. Doing this once before the ground freezes should be adequate.

Luanne V. Coziahr

Begin Control of Stripe Smut of Turfgrass

The smuts comprise a diverse and widely distributed group of fungi that attack the heads, stems, and leaves of grasses. Many common turfgrasses host stripe smut, but the disease is most extensive on Kentucky bluegrass. Symptoms are most obvious in spring when infected turf shows bright yellow patches of smutted plants. When closely examined, the leaves have long linear black stripes. Infected leaves rupture and curl from the tips downward. Smutted plants remain infected for life and serve as sources of inoculum. Stripe smut can be controlled by treatment with a systemic fungicide. The initial application is made in October with one or two additional applications in April. Smutted plants are susceptible to heat stress so untreated turf may thin out during the summer.

John E. Watkins

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN, COOPERATING WITH THE COUNTIES AND THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Cooperative Extension provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.

Protect High Value Turf Against Snow Mold Injury

Pink snow mold and gray snow mold are the most common cold weather turfgrass diseases in Nebraska. Generally, wet weather, persistent drizzle, or fog when temperatures are below 50°F predispose turf to pink snow mold. A deep snow cover developing on unfrozen turf early in winter provides favorable environmental conditions for both pink and gray snow molds. Although the snow cover protects the grass from frost injury, it also maintains a stable, humid climate favorable for mycelial growth of the snow mold fungi. The longer the snow cover persists, the greater the snow mold injury.

Cultural and chemical methods can be used to prevent or control snow mold injury to turfgrass. To minimize injury, mow grass regularly until the turf goes dormant, avoid quick-acting nitrogen fertilizers in fall, and install snow fences to prevent drifting. Use preventative fungicides on turf prone to attack. The timing and number of applications will vary, but usually the first application should be made in mid to late November.

John E. Watkins

Use Fall Spraying to Avoid Disease Problems

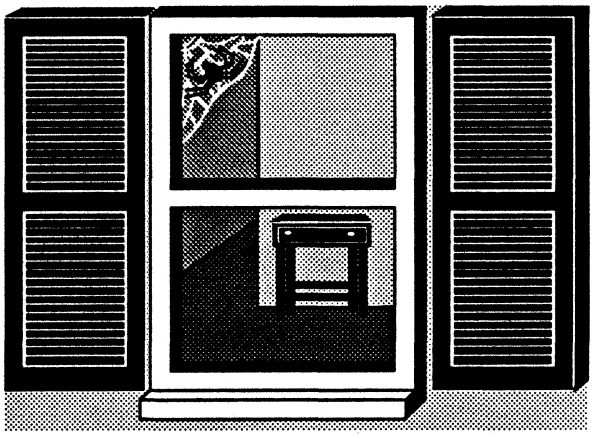
Don't forget to mark your calendars to take care of some diseases this winter using dormant season spraying. A common disease of peaches during wet springs is peach leaf curl, and it can only be controlled with the application of dormant sprays. Once buds begin to swell, it is too late to act because infection already has occurred. Lime sulfur is labeled for this use and available in many garden centers. For best results in Nebraska, we recommend spraying in late fall after the leaves have dropped or in early to midwinter.

Luanne V. Coziahr

INSECT SCIENCE

Fall Invaders Irritating, But Problem Shortlived

Autumn is a season of restlessness for many adult insects, which are in search of dwindling food sources or shelters for overwintering. Warm sunny afternoons stimulate mass-migratory behavior among flying insects, often disturbing the peace of children or adults outdoors. Insects such as *chinch bugs, fungus beetles, grain beetles, dermestids, bugs* and *flies* arise from field crop settings disrupted by harvest activities. They seem to be everywhere — on outdoor laundry, freshly-painted exterior walls, windows, and even in the home where they are attracted to lights at night. The tiny gold, black and white *minute pirate bugs* alight on exposed skin and painfully probe with their potent, needle-like mouthparts. Other arthropods associated with shade trees, ornamentals and turf, such as *boxelder bugs, elm leaf beetles* and *clover mites*, begin congregating about the home exterior, seeking entry through cracks and crevices. Some families find themselves captives in their own homes, plagued by *yellowjackets* chasing them whenever they go into the yard. Even window screens are inadequate to keep out the tiny *fruit flies* that compete to get at ripening fruits and vegetables before they can be preserved! Finally, various kinds of *spiders*, all the more threatening since the summer hit, "Arachnophobia", seem to be common.



Frustrated homeowners can take heart that these annoyances are short-lived and will soon pass when cold weather prevails. Rarely do most of these "pests" cause real harm or become established in the home. To reduce invasion by overwintering pests, seal all cracks and crevices that could conceivably allow entry. Rake leafy debris away from exterior foundation walls (where spiders, cockroaches, millipedes and crickets hide). Make sure that screening is intact in windows, doors and roof vents. Evict larger arthropods as they are observed with a paper towel or vacuum cleaner. Finally, residual insecticide sprays (ex. Dursban, Baygon, diazinon or Ficam) applied to exterior surfaces where insects congregate may curtail invasion. Indoor insecticide treatment rarely is necessary.

Jim Kalisch

1991 WINTER MEETINGS

Crop Pest Management Update

The program agenda has been finalized for the fourth annual Crop Pest Management Update (CPMU) Conference. This year's CPMU will be held at the Ramada Inn in Kearney Nov. 27-28.

The program includes many topics of interest to those working in pest management of field crops, including: an indepth review of shattercane and its management; seed corn pest management; sustainable agriculture and what it's all about; reduced rates of herbicides in soybeans and insecticides in corn; food safety issues; pesticide movement in soils; and updates on the University's pest management recommendations for 1991.

Promotional mailings have been sent to those who have attended past meetings and other interested persons. For more information or to receive a copy of the conference agenda or preregistration materials, write Extension Entomology, 210 PI Bldg., University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68583-0816 or call (402) 472-2125. The preregistration fee of $75 includes the program, a proceedings, refreshments, and two lunches. A late fee of $25 will be added for registrations made after Nov. 12. Room reservations should be made directly with the Ramada Inn by mail or by calling (308) 237-5971 or (800) 248-4460. We hope to see you at Kearney in November for another successful Crop Pest Management Update Conference.

Steve Danielson

Crop Protection Clinics

This year's Crop Protection Clinics will include something new — a soils topic will be added to the regular agenda of pest management topics. The clinics will continue with their format of having 15-minute presentations followed by questions. Entomologists, plant pathologists, weed scientists and soil scientists from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will present the latest information on crop protection strategies. The dates and locations for the 1991 Crop Protection Clinics follow. For more information about the meetings call the Extension agent where the meeting is to be held or watch for details in the next issue of IPW News.

Alex Martin and Bob Stougaard

Jan. 7 — Lincoln, Lancaster Extension Office
Jan. 8 — Norfolk, Villa Inn
Jan. 9 — Fremont, Holiday Lodge
Jan. 10 — Auburn, Arbor Manor
Jan. 15 — Scottsbluff, Panhandle Research and Extension Center
Jan. 16 — Ogallala, Holiday Inn
Jan. 17 — Cozad, Elks Club
Jan. 18 — Holdrege, Ag Center
Jan. 22 — Hastings, Holiday Inn
Jan. 23 — O'Neill, Legion Club
Jan. 24 — Fairbury, 4-H Building
Jan. 25 — York, Chances "R" Restaurant

Regional Weed Science Meeting

Producers and commercial representatives may be interested in the topics to be presented at the North Central Weed Science Society annual meeting at the Marriott Hotel in Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 11-13. Many of the papers to be presented will be of an applied nature and deal with herbicide performance and weed control in crops common to Nebraska. A symposium on Sustainable Agriculture will be included.

For more information, contact Alex R. Martin, 362 Plant Science Bldg., University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0915 or call (402) 472-1527.

Recertification, Commercial Applicator Pesticide

Preregistration is not required for commercial applicator pesticide training for recertification. Meetings will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the sites listed below. For more information, contact Larry Schulze, UNL Extension Pesticide Coordinator, 101 Natural Resources Hall, UNL, Lincoln, Ne 68583-0818.

The meeting schedule for initial commercial applicator pesticide certification was in the Sept. 21 issue.

Feb. 5 — Norfolk. Villa Inn, Hwys 275 & 81. Covering ag plant, ornamental and turf, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, and food processing and grain handling (grain fumigation).

Feb. 6 — Lincoln. Nebraska Center, 33rd and Holdrege. Covering ag plant, ag animal, forestry, ornamental and turf, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, food processing and grain handling (grain fumigation), and wood preservation.

Feb. 7 — Omaha. Douglas County Extension Office, 8015 W. Center Road. Covering ag plant, ornamental and turf, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, and food processing and grain handling (grain fumigation).

Feb. 12 — Scottsbluff. Panhandle Research and Extension Center, 4502 Avenue I. Covering ag plant, ornamental and turf, aquatics, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, food processing and handling (grain fumigation).

Feb. 14 — Kearney. Buffalo County Extension Office, 1400 E. 34th St. Covering ag plant, ornamental turf, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, and food processing and grain handling (grain fumigation).

Feb. 27 — North Platte. Stockman Inn, I-80 and Hwy 83. Covering all categories.

March 4 — Grand Island. Midtown Holiday Inn, 2503 S. Locust. Covering ag plant, ornamental and turf, aquatics, right of way, structural, public health, regulatory, demonstration and research, and food processing and grain handling (grain fumigation).

Conservation Tillage Programs

In 1991, area conservation tillage meetings are generally being replaced by planter, drill, cultivator or sprayer clinics to meet the changing needs of producers. For more information on individual meetings, contact the Extension agent listed or Elbert Dickey, Extension Agricultural Engineer, Lincoln, 472-3950.

Nov. 12 — Planter Clinic for dealers, Dinkel Implement in Scribner; Contact Russ Lang, Fremont, (402) 727-2775 or Jim Peterson, Blair, (402) 426-9455.

Nov. 19 — Planter Clinic in Broken Bow; Contact Don Lydic, Broken Bow, (308) 872-6831.

Nov. 19 — Planter Clinic in Lexington; Contact Bruce Treffer, (308) 324-5501.

Jan. 8 — Drill Clinic, KTTT Farm Show, Columbus; Contact Duane Kantor, (402) 563-4901.

Jan. 30 — Tillage Meeting, Site TBA; Contact Don Lydic, Broken Bow, (308) 872-6831.

Feb. 7 — Tillage Meeting, Site TBA; Contact Paul Swanson, Hastings, (402) 461-7209.

Feb. 12 — Planter Clinic in Walthill; Contact Frank Morse, Dakota City, 987-2140.

Feb. 13 — Planter Clinic in Battle Creek; Contact Chris Carlson, Battle Creek, (402) 675-2785.

Feb. 13 — Planter Clinic in Stanton; Contact Myrna DuBois, Stanton, (402) 439-2231 or Dave Speidel, Soil Conservation Service, Stanton, (402) 439-2213.

Feb. 14 — Planter Clinic in O'Neill; Contact Ralph Kulm, Butte, (402) 775-2491.

Feb. 14 — Planter Clinic in Creighton; Contact Terry Gompert, Center, (402) 288-4224.

Feb. 15 — Planter Clinic in Madison; Contact Chris Carlson, Battle Creek, (402) 675-2785.

Feb. 15 — Planter Clinic in Newman Grove; Contact Chris Carlson, Battle Creek, (402) 675-2785.

Feb. 18-20 — Six Planter Clinics in Platte, Boone, Colfax, Butler and Nance counties; Contact Duane Kantor, Columbus, (402) 563-4901, or Phil Johnson, Albion, (402) 395-2158.

Feb. 26 — Tillage Meetings, Lancaster County; Contact Gus Shires or Dave Varner, Lincoln, (402) 471-7180.

Irrigation Shortcourse

Speakers will address irrigation management as well as its effect on water and energy savings and water quality. This year's program is divided into presentations on irrigation systems and irrigation management. Preregistration is preferred. For more information, contact your local Extension agent.

Feb. 5-6 — North Platte. Central Plains Irrigation Short Course at the Holiday Inn in North Platte. Registration begins at 10 a.m. Feb. 5.

Feb. 8 — Alliance. Nebraska Irrigation Short Course, Eagles Club.

Feb. 12 — Blue Hill. Nebraska Irrigation Short Course, Blue Hill Community Building.

Horticulture Conference

The 1991 Direct Marketing Conference will be Feb. 19-20 at the New World Inn, Columbus. This meeting addresses the needs of commercial vegetable, small fruit, and ornamental growers.

For more information, contact: Dr. Laurie Hodges, UNL Department of Horticulture, 377 Plant Science Building, Lincoln, NE 68583-0724.

For More Information

The following new or revised publications were recently released by the University of Nebraska Department of Agricultural Communications:

EC90-103 Nebraska Fall-sown Small Grain Variety Tests 1990. This circular is a progress report of variety trials conducted by the University of Nebraska Agronomy Department and the South Central, West Central and Panhandle Research and Extension centers and their associated agricultural laboratories.

MP 56 1991 Beef Cattle Report. Full-length, detailed reports of recent beef research at the University of Nebraska.

G78-425 1991 Beef Report Summaries. Capsulized reports on recent beef research.

These publications and many more are available free or at a nominal charge at your local Extension office or from the UNL Department of Agricultural Communications. For a Publications Catalog, contact your local Extension office or write Bulletins, 105 Ag Communications Bldg., University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0918.

IPW News Contributors

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