

Weekly Article

7-5-2022

Does it Pay To Apply Fungicide?

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. Where is all the rain at now? This is a question many producers are asking as the weather has trended in a hot and dry pattern. Some producers have reported that they have not seen a measurable amount of rain for 2 weeks and with air temperatures reaching the mid 90's, crops are showing the signs of heat stress. These weather events are referred to as flash drought and we hope and pray that it is truly a flash! In my scouting efforts this past week I began to see corn to role, especially in compacted end rows, many producers will call the pineapple due to the corn looking much more like a pineapple. The corn crop across the county is very variable with growth stages between V8 and VT or tasseling, the same goes with soybeans with growth stages from emerging to R1 or just beginning to flower. The drier weather has helped producers wrap up the first cutting of hay and the hay has been made dry! Pastures are slowing down but still in good condition, some producers have taken time to plant some warm season annual forages such as Sudan grass, sorghum Sudan, and Teff grass. Pest pressure has been increasing. Japanese beetle feeding, bean leaf beetle, and spotted cucumber beetle populations has increased the past few weeks. Farmers are also making their second applications of herbicide to get control of the weeds; many producers might also opt to add a fungicide to their spray mixture to help prevent fungus infection later in the growing season. Today I want to discuss fungicide treatments and if they are actually worth applying, here are some considerations before you spend the extra money to apply fungicide to your crop this season.

1. **Know your field history-** Have you had disease pressure in a certain field in the past? For example, Northern corn leaf blight was present in a lot of corn acres last year, the pathogen can overwinter on crop residue. If you saw heavy pressure from that disease the likelihood of having problems again could be increased.
2. **Think about other options-** Cultural practices such as crop rotation, choosing resistant varieties, or tillage practices can help prevent or lower the chances of pathogen infection.
3. **Consider added cost-** Fungicide treatments are not cheap with the price of chemicals, time, and wear and tare on equipment, prices can range from \$30-40 dollars per acre.

4. **Make sure spraying equipment is adequate** – Nozzle type and pressure is important for making proper application. Air induced flat fan nozzles work the best for systemic contact fungicides and 30-40 psi gives the best spray coverage.
5. **Is the threat for disease pressure high-** For most fungus or diseases to infect plants it takes the right weather conditions, wet and humid conditions will favor disease infection and spreading? Some disease with travel in weather system from other areas, an example of this is southern rust spores move in the weather system from southern areas of the country.
6. **Choose the right product-** Not all fungicides are created equal, fungicides are categorized by codes, site of action, group name, chemical name, and common names. Is the fungicide better utilized as a preventative or curative, single site or multiple site of actions, narrow or broad spectrum, organic or inorganic.
7. **Timing is everything-** Research has shown that for corn and soybean early reproductive stage of growth is the best time to apply fungicides to return on your investment. R1 growth stage in soybeans up to early pod stage. VT to R1 for corn. If corn is going to be made for silage make sure to take pre harvest intervals in to account.

Some other details to go over.

- Crop planting certification with USDA FSA – July 15th.
- Adams county Fair – July 11th – 16th make plans to attend and support the future leader of our county and country.
- Ohio State Fair- July 27, 2022 – August 7th
- Southwest Corn Growers- Agronomy field Day will be held August 16th, 2022. Contact Ken Ford with ANR Educator for Fayette County OSU Extension for more details. Phone- 740-335-1150 or email at ford.70 @ osu.edu