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 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Tobacco Black Shank and Blue Mold

Tobacco information is not as abundant in my column as it was 10 years ago. We do not have near as many growers in Ohio today, however there are still several acres of tobacco produced by fewer growers. I have had a few calls concerning Black Shank showing up in several tobacco patches over the past few weeks. I have sent samples to the University of Kentucky Plant Diagnostic Lab to confirm that it is in fact Black Shank. Black Shank will often show up in a tobacco patch with small areas or even just a plant here and there that turns yellow and eventually dies. If this is the case, Ridomil Gold applied just prior to a rain event may be helpful. If no rain is expected, the fungicide can be cultivated in. Apply the fungicide to the soil and ideally direct it near the base of the plants. Follow label rates of one pint and also refer to the 2016 FUNGICIDE GUIDE FOR BURLEY AND DARK TOBACCO.

This report came out in the June 28 Kentucky Pest News. Blue mold of tobacco was found last week in Caswell County, located in central North Carolina. This is further north than its previous known locations in Florida and Georgia.

The pathogen that causes blue mold is an obligate oomycete, meaning that it requires a living host and it is relatively closely related to *Pythium* and *Phytophthora* (the black shank pathogen). A few modern burley varieties have partial resistance to blue mold, but none have what we would consider high resistance; there is no resistance at all in dark tobacco.

Since blue mold is blown in our direction during moist, windy weather, growers are reliant on fungicides for disease management. These options include Quadris, Revus, Forum, Manzate, Orondis Ultra (NOT Gold), Actigard, Aliette, and Presidio. For guidance on choosing a blue mold fungicide, please refer to Tobacco Guide mentioned above. These were available at the GAP Training that we offered in February, March and April. I still have a few of those if you missed out on picking one up. Please call ahead if you wish to pick one up so I can make sure we still have them. My cell is 937-515-2314 or you can email me at dugan.46@osu.edu.

Scouting for Blue Mold

Tobacco growers should scout tobacco fields for blue mold in the coming days, particularly since many areas of Kentucky have had rainy weather recently. Focus searches in areas where the pathogen



will encounter disease-conducive environments:

- Low spots
- Areas with partial shade
- Lower leaves
- Field locations where water tends to drain slowly.

Look for yellow to orange spots on tops of lower leaves, and then turn leaves over to check for blue-gray, somewhat fuzzy sporulation. Sporulation is more abundant under humid conditions, so scouting is most effective when done in early morning or late afternoon. The more recently set plantings will be more susceptible to infection by the blue mold pathogen. However, all tobacco may be considered at-risk, especially crops located east of I-75.

On Saturday, July 2, blue mold was found in Carter County in Eastern Tennessee. This increases the risk for Southern Ohio, however most recent weather patterns have not been from the south.

If you suspect tobacco blue mold, please get in touch with your county Extension agent as soon as possible to facilitate rapid identification of this important tobacco disease. My contact information is listed above.

Hay Supply and Values

As the spring/summer of 2016 continues with a rainy weekend over the Fourth of July, there are several farmers still trying to finish up with first cutting hay. The rain fall totals are not as extreme as they were in 2015, but there were stretches during May and June when it seemed to rain every other day or 2 out of every 3 and may have only totaled a quarter of an inch.

While some areas were really getting dry in June and in pretty bad need of rain, others have had consistently regular rains that have kept forages green and growing. There is a good chance in those areas with above normal rainfall, and fields that were harvested early, of a pretty good second cutting.

With that said hay appears to be abundant and could be even more with the potential for a second cutting. Basic economics will tell you that an above average supply of hay will result in prices most likely not being high unless the rain stops and we end up with a dry August and September.

Dates to Remember

July 10-16 Adams County Fair

July 23 Hops Yard Open House 10:00 a.m. several locations including 2 in Brown County and one in Clermont