



Arkansas Soybean Rust Working Group Update

April 4, 2005

Issue No.2

Since our last communication, the *Arkansas Soybean Rust Working Group* has been extremely busy. Fortunately, four of our members were able to visit Brazil during March and confirmed what we had previously suspected. One, soybean rust can be devastating if left uncontrolled and two, the information included in our *First Detector Training* sessions was right on target. Cliff Coker, John Rupe, and I visited the southeastern production areas of Brazil (Sao Paulo and Parana regions). Based on environmental conditions, these areas are more like what we would expect in the United States under worst-case scenarios (unlike the Mato Grosso areas that you read about in the press). We met with local producers and consultants in order to get firsthand information not only on soybean rust, but also on agricultural production systems and environmental conditions. Below is a description of a typical production system for this area:

Typical Southeastern Brazilian Agricultural Production System

Multi-crop: including corn, wheat, dry beans, sugarcane, & soybeans (even some have ventured into beef cattle and dairy operations).

- One operation we visited consisted of 30% corn, 40% soybeans, and 30% dry beans/wheat

Average size : 1600 to 2000 acres total

All seem to use a consultant or consultation firms

- A typical consultant will cover 26,000 acres (corn and soybean)

Typical rotation will consist of two years of soybean and one year of corn

- Average soybean yields: 50 bushel per acre soybean and 180 bushel per acre corn

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Typical Southeastern Brazilian Agricultural Production System (cont.)

Soybean maturity group ranges 6.0 to 7.9

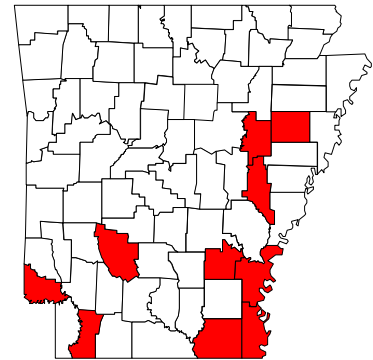
- Typically this region has three distinct soybean planting periods (referred to as “early, mid, and late”)
- Row spacing: less than 30”

The dry weather conditions experienced during March 2005 will likely result in 25-30% yield reduction.

The trip provided a wealth of information. Also, it confirmed the material presented at each of the *First Detector Training* sessions. However, the South American environment and soybean production systems are very different from those in the Mid-South. As good as this information was, it still raises the question: “What conclusions can we accurately draw from this different environment and production system?” Only time will tell; however, I still feel confident we can still produce soybeans in Arkansas in spite of this disease.

Sentinel Plot Update:

Extension Soybean Program Associates Alan Beach and Shawn Lancaster have been hard at work over the past 3 weeks getting in our sentinel plots. As of today (April 4, 2005), we have 13 sentinel plots planted in 10 different counties. Counties such as Chicot, Ashley, and Desha have two locations. The map at the right displays the current locations of sentinel plots and more will be added by the end of the week.



Scouting and Sampling Update:

Last week Trey Reaper and I obtained plant samples from many areas of the state. The map at the right displays the counties where we collected volunteer soybean, crimson clover, white clover, and narrow-leaf vetch samples. All samples were incubated in moisture chambers, and no soybean rust symptoms were detected. Another group concentrated on trying to obtain kudzu samples along Crowley’s Ridge. However, all plants were still dormant at this time.

