October 24, 2008

BUDGETS

Volatile input prices and commodity prices have growers questioning wheat plantings and 2009 crop production plans. Budget guides for wheat/soybeans, corn, cotton, peanuts, and tobacco can be found at http://www.ag-econ.ncsu.edu/extension.htm. Click on Enterprise Budgets/Irrigation Budgets.

WHEAT

Variety Selection

2008 Wheat Variety Recommendations by Randy Weisz, NCSU Extension Small Grain Specialist, was included in a July 16 newsletter. This small grains fact sheet can also be found at http://www.smallgrains.ncsu.edu

Getting Ready For The 2008 Wheat Season

The September North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association Newsletter contained Getting Ready For The 2008 Wheat Season by Randy Weisz, NCSU Extension Small Grain Specialist. Below are key points from the article.

Pick High Yielding Varieties Appropriate For Your Part Of NC.
The 2008 Wheat Variety Recommendations Table 1 Above Average Yielding group is a good place to start for Duplin County wheat growers.

Minimize Risk & Maximize Yield.
Spring freeze probably causes the most severe yield losses a producer can confront. Heading date is the best indication of how susceptible a variety is to Spring freeze. To avoid freeze damage, producers should plant at least 3 varieties. No more than 1 variety should be early or med-early heading. Duplin County growers should also select varieties with resistance to powdery mildew.

The Highest Yield Potential Is Achieved By Planting On-Time.
The highest yield potential is achieved by planting on-time, which for most parts of NC is the last half of October or the first half of November. Many growers have stated they plan to avoid Spring freeze damage by planting late. That approach might avoid Spring freeze damage, but it also results in yield losses due simply to planting late!

Calibrate Your Drill For Each Variety.
Seed size and seed treatments result in different flow-rates through drill seed metering mechanisms. A drill calibration procedure can be found in 2004-05 Small Grain Production Guide Pages 17-18 or at http://www.smallgrains.ncsu.edu/Guide/Chapter6.html
Don’t Skip At-Plant Fertility.
To achieve maximum yield potential, the soil pH, P-Index, K-Index, S-Index, and Mn-Index need to be right at planting! There is no substitute for soil testing and taking care of these nutrients at planting. Waiting until January (or later) to take care of a wheat crop’s P, K, S, or Mn needs is a good way to miss maximum yield! If you are planting on-time and want maximum yield and test weight, 15-30 pounds/acre of at-plant nitrogen is critical!

Planting Dates

For upper half Duplin County, the recommended wheat planting period is October 20-November 8. For lower half Duplin County, the recommended wheat planting period is October 26-November 14. Planting earlier than recommended promotes powdery mildew, Hessian fly, barley yellow dwarf, and freeze damage.

Plant early heading varieties near the end of the recommended planting period. If litter is preplant incorporated and used as the wheat/soybean fertilizer, plant near the end of the recommended planting period.

Seeding Rate

If planting in a timely manner with 90% or better germination seed using a 7-inch drill spacing, 20 seeds per row foot should be planted. If planting 2 weeks late with 90% or better germination seed using a 7-inch drill spacing, 26 seeds per row foot should be planted.

Planting Depth

Newer wheat varieties have semidwarf genes that reduce overall plant height. These genes also reduce seedling emergence if seeds are placed too deep. Wheat seeds should be planted 1-1 ½ inches deep when soil moisture is adequate, and slightly deeper if moisture is deficient.

Disease & Insect Management

Most growers should have a goal of achieving good disease and insect control without the expense of a seed treatment and/or a foliar fungicide whenever possible. Resistant varieties and recommended production practices represent the best approaches for low-cost disease and insect management.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NC Precision Farming Field Day
Tuesday, Nov. 25 8:15 am – 5:00 pm
NC Global Transpark, Kinston
The registration fee is $10 if paid in advance and $20 at-the-door. For advance payment, make the check payable to NCSU and mail to Kathryn Luxford Soil Science Dept. Campus Box 7643 – NCSU Raleigh, NC 27695-7643.

Crop Protection School
Tuesday, Dec. 16 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
NCSU McKimmon Center, Raleigh
This event is the NC Crop Protection Association annual meeting plus crop updates. Register online at http://ContinuingEducation.ncsu.edu or call 919-515-2261.

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