



PAINTED LADY BUTTERFLY MAKING AN ENTRANCE IN NEBRASKA!

You may have remembered a couple of years ago the painted lady butterfly really made its mark in southeast Nebraska. Well there are reports that its immature stage, the thistle caterpillar is causing significant defoliation in some soybean fields recently. Defoliation levels are high enough (30% or greater) that some producers are treating fields. When the caterpillars are mature they will make a cocoon and the painted lady butterflies will emerge. With the late planting of soybeans this year, soybean plants are not as far along as normal and may be more susceptible to defoliation by different pests. Two years ago they were here much later in the summer, although a few farmers had infestations of thistle caterpillars earlier in the summer. It is always a good idea to scout fields periodically for pests. If defoliation is at threshold levels, it may be beneficially to combine an insecticide with a herbicide, but only if it at the economic threshold. Estimate defoliation levels in several parts of the field. Assess defoliation over the whole plant canopy, not just the upper leaves. In vegetative (pre-flowering) stages, consider treatment if the insects are present and feeding, and defoliation will exceed 30%. Do we need to be concerned about the painted lady butterflies and thistle caterpillars causing problems with crops this year? That is a good question. There are usually a couple of generations of the painted lady butterfly per year in the Midwest. It is recommendation is to continually scout soybean fields for all pests throughout the summer, including the painted lady caterpillars and thistle caterpillars. If defoliation reaches 20% during the reproductive stage, treatment with an insecticide may be warranted.

Another pest that impacted a few farmers in the area the last couple of years was the soybean gall midge. In southeast Nebraska, it was mostly showing up more in Cass and Otoe Counties and impacting yields in some fields, but was found in Nemaha and Richardson counties in 2018, but not at high populations. Keep an eye out for this new pest in our area. This insect is being studied and monitored by University of Nebraska entomologists. Traps placed in fields in Cass county indicated the adults have emerged. These adults will start laying eggs at the base of the soybean plants with the larvae hatching and burrowing into the soybean plants, causing damage and impacting yields. Major yield losses are worse at the field edges and decrease as you move toward the center of the field. With the emergence of the adults, soybean growers that had significant yield losses in 2018 and 2019 may be applying insecticides to soybeans in these fields for adult control. This pest will continually to be studied to determine the best strategies for limiting yield loss to soybeans.

Two fields days on weed control are being planned for the near future. The Weed Management Field Day is scheduled for July 26th from 8:30 – 1:00 p.m. at the South Central Ag Lab near Clay Center, NE. There will be on-site demonstrations of new technology /herbicides for weed control in soybeans and corn. Pre-register at: agronomy.unl.edu/fieldday.



Another field day is scheduled for July 10th at Carleton, NE. This is the Glyphosate-Resistant Palmer Amaranth Management Field Day and Dr. Jason Norsworthy is the keynote speaker at this field day. He is a professor at the University of Arkansas and has been working with Palmer Amaranth for many years.

Directions to the field day are: From Geneva, NE, go south on Hwy 81 for 14.6 miles. Turn west onto Hwy 4 for 5.3 miles. Farm field is located on the south side of Hwy 4 between C St. and Renwick St. in Carleton. Pre-register at: agronomy.unl.edu/palmer
GPS: 40°18'24.7"N 97°40'29.0"W

These field days are free, but registration is required. For Field Day Questions? Contact Amit Jhala, 402-472-1534 or amit.jhala@unl.edu and for Registration Questions? Contact Wendy Morrissey, 402-472-5636 or wmorrissey2@unl.edu . If you have other questions, feel free to call me at (402) 274-4755 or email glesoing2@unl.edu or gary.lesoing@unl.edu.

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