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## TEST FOR SCN THIS FALL AND SELECT SEED ACCORDINGLY

With harvest wrapped up, it's the perfect time to analyze varieties and yields and most are happy with their soybean yields this year, but not all. We had dryland fields that received more rain in August than others and then the hail storm east of Milligan. But as a whole, good management and Mother Nature combined to boost area soybean yields.

But as John Wilson, extension educator in Burt County, said in a recent CropWatch article and explained at the Wilber Crop Clinic last February, there will be some fields where there is some disappointment in yields caused by a soil organism or what John calls the "Soybean Blues". The number one yield robber for soybean growers in Nebraska and across the U.S. is soybean cyst nematodes (SCN) in some of our fields. Last year SCN caused over \$1 billion in losses for soybean growers across the country. The loss for Nebraska soybean farmers is estimated at \$45 million.

Before the ground freezes, you can collect soil samples from these underperforming acres much as you would collect a surface soil sample for fertilizer recommendations. Although the cysts can be observed on the roots during the growing season, a soil sample is the only way to determine the level of infestation in your fields. There are two good things about sampling for SCN. First, it can be done any time of the year, and second, the Nebraska Soybean Board will cover the cost of SCN analysis for your samples submitted to the University of Nebraska. I have the sample bags at my office, just ask for them and we can mail them to you or stop by our office.

SCN is a microscopic roundworm that attacks the soybean root, competing with the plant for moisture and nutrients, and causes injury sites on the roots which can increase the incidence of soil-borne diseases such as Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) or Brown Stem Rot (BSR). If you suspected these diseases in your field this year, you need to check that area for soybean cyst. The only stage of its life when SCN is visible without a microscope is when the female's body cavity fills with eggs and they erupt through the root walls, forming the small cysts. You will have to look close, because even at this stage of their life cycle, the cysts are smaller than the head of a pin.

Now, while those field areas that didn't yield as well as expected are still fresh in your mind — or stick out like a sore thumb on your yield maps — is the time to do something about it. If your crop consultant, field scout, or co-op is already collecting soil samples, ask them to take a few more soil cores and then split the sample, half for fertilizer recommendations and half for SCN analysis. You might also want them to collect these samples on corn ground that will be going to soybeans next year.

If SCN is detected, you can start managing it by using resistant varieties. You can also check out a soil probe at my office if you want to take some samples yourself. For more information you can go to [cropwatch.unl.edu](http://cropwatch.unl.edu) on the Internet or stop by your local Extension Office.

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