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Field Scouting Critical

As the 2013 Kansas wheat crop begins to break dormancy, wheat producers need to be cautious about wheat disease threats moving in from southern states.

Already this spring, there are several reports of rust developing in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi, says K-State Plant Pathologist Erick De Wolf. Stripe rust has been observed in all four states and appears to be spreading beyond the initial foci of infection. Leaf rust has been reported in Texas, but not the other states.

The reports of stripe rust and leaf rust from Texas are the most important for Kansas, because weather systems often transport the rust spores from Texas into Oklahoma and Kansas. Varieties such as Everest, Armour, and TAM 111 are being affected in Texas this year. This is similar to what was observed in 2012 and there are no reports of new races of stripe rust to date. De Wolf said that Bob Hunger, a wheat disease specialist with Oklahoma State University, reported no finds of rust in Oklahoma as of March 21.

"Growers in Kansas should be monitoring the situation in Texas and Oklahoma. If the disease continues to develop in Texas or is reported in Oklahoma, we will need to evaluate the need for fungicides to suppress rust development in fields planted to susceptible varieties," Hunger said.

Wheat farmers wanting to learn more about issues plaguing wheat fields, plus gain a greater understanding of new research happening at K-State, should plan on attending the Biannual Wheat and Canola In-Depth Diagnostic School May 8-9 in Garden City.

"In years past this was a wheat-only school," said John Holman, cropping systems agronomist with K-State Research and Extension, based in Garden City. "This year, we have added topics on canola production since canola acres in the region have rapidly increased in recent years. This will be a great opportunity for crop advisors and growers to view topics first hand in the field. This is a chance to learn and refresh advisors' and producers' field skills and visit one on one with the specialists."

The school will be held at K-State's Southwest Research-Extension Center at 4500 E. Mary St. The Wednesday, May 8 session runs from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Thursday, May 9 from 7:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Breakout sessions will be in the field looking at topics first hand. Topics include Crop Growth, Development and Staging; Weed Control; Crop Herbicide Injury; Crop Herbicide Injury; Aerial Imagery and Crop Scouting; Canola Production; Commercial Pesticide License Recertification Core Hour; Weed Identification; Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizers and Methods; Entomology; Fertilizer Rate and Placement; Wheat and Canola Diseases; and Wheat and Canola Seeding Management and Tillage.

The fee, which includes refreshments and lunch both days, is \$100 if paid by May 1. The fee after that date and at the door is \$125. To register, contact Ashlee Wood at awood22@ksu.edu or call 620-276-8286.

