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Introduction

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Introduction

Abstract
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Disciplines
Agriculture | Plant Pathology
Introduction

On behalf of the Iowa Soybean Rust Team, we would like to welcome you to this special Asian soybean rust issue of the Integrated Crop Management Newsletter.

Asian soybean rust is a serious disease that causes leaf spots (lesions) and eventually defoliation of soybean plants, sometimes in a matter of a few weeks, if left untreated. The fungus that causes the disease is Phakopsora pachyrhizi. Yield loss occurs in the form of poor pod set and seed fill. The fungus reproduces prolifically by producing spores that are extremely small and are wind-borne.

Asian soybean rust has been reported in Hawaii since 1994 but was not found in the continental United States until November 2004. On November 10, 2004, the USDA announced discovery of Asian soybean rust in Louisiana, and in the succeeding weeks, the disease was found in eight additional states in the southern United States (see map on the following page).

The economic impact of Asian soybean rust on Iowa remains unknown. In addition to the movement of spores of the fungus into Iowa, environmental conditions must be conducive for disease development. Nonetheless, this disease represents a major threat to soybean production in the state, and Iowa soybean growers and those who serve growers must be well educated and ready to react when the disease does appear in the state.

The information contained within this issue has been put together by members of the Iowa Soybean Rust Team, which comprises personnel from the ISU College of Agriculture, ISU Extension campus and field, the Iowa Soybean Association and Iowa Soybean Promotion Board, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health.
Inspection Service. The team has been planning for the possible arrival of Asian soybean rust in Iowa since the fall of 2003. Those plans may be put to use in the 2005 growing season.

The articles contained in this special issue of the newsletter represent the current state of knowledge about Asian soybean rust, its likely spread into Iowa in 2005 and beyond, and the management options and considerations that exist for battling this disease.

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Research on Asian soybean rust is ongoing; the information in this newsletter was accurate as of the date of publication.