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## Crop Scouting Competition 2015: Open for Enrollment

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## **Abstract**

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## **Keywords**

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## Crop Scouting Competition 2015: Open for Enrollment

By Adam Sisson, Integrated Pest Management, and Daren Mueller, Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology

Do those soybean leaves have frog-eye leaf spot or herbicide injury? Is that Palmer amaranth or common waterhemp growing near the field entrance? Are twospotted spider mites or soybean sudden death syndrome causing the yellow patches at the Peterson Farm?

These can be tough problems to solve. But crop scouting, along with knowing what questions to ask and clues to be on the lookout for, can help determine the right answers. To help provide students an opportunity to learn some of these crop-scouting skills, along with integrated pest management (IPM) basics, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is hosting a Crop Scouting Competition for Iowa Youth on August 4, 2015. Teams of high school students (those completing grades 9-12 in the 2015-16 school year) from across Iowa are invited to compete.

[Click here](#) to watch the 2015 Scouting Competition promotional video.

One of the strengths of the competition is that it involves teams working at outdoor field stations in corn and soybean plots run by Iowa State University Extension faculty and staff, among others. This allows teams to get outside the classroom and use their skills, and also to learn directly from extension professionals.

Learning the basics of crop scouting while young can help out on the farm, and to prepare students for agronomy-related careers.

“Getting students excited about making good pest management decisions using crop scouting and saving money sets a great base for their education – and for Iowa’s ag businesses in the future.” Says Daren Mueller, ISU Integrated Pest Management program director and extension plant pathologist.



**Photo. Scouting a cornfield during the competition. Courtesy Tom Schultz.**

The format will be approximately 12 stations on a variety of topics including:

- Corn and soybean diseases
- Corn and soybean insects
- Weed identification
- Corn and soybean growth stages
- Estimating corn yield
- Plant populations
- Adequate field assessment (e.g., scouting patterns)
- Noninfectious crop disorders.



**Photo. Student team examining plants for herbicide injury. Courtesy Tom Schultz.**

Schools, clubs, or other organizations may enter a team composed of three to five participants. An adult team leader must accompany each team of students. Past team leaders have been FFA or ag teachers, seed dealers, coop employees, and others.

Top scoring teams win prizes: \$500 for 1st, \$300 for 2nd, \$150 for 3rd, \$50 for 4th.

More information about the crop scouting competition and instructions on how to register a team are available online at [www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/cropscouting](http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/cropscouting). Teams must be registered by June 15. Registration is \$50 per team; the fee will be refunded when the team attends the competition. Payment by check is due along with the registration form by June 15.

“The class will be coming back,” said Joe Shirbroun, DuPont Pioneer seed dealer and Farmersburg team leader in Clayton County. “They loved it and I truly enjoyed the day. I was proud of the class I had and I told them I wanted them to get some experience and have fun.”

Sponsors include DuPont Pioneer, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Certified Crop Advisors, and Iowa Independent Crop Consultants Association.

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