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Leaf diseases on small corn

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Abstract
Now that the corn has started to grow again, producers and crop scouts are starting to notice disease problems other than poor emergence, seed rot, and seedling diseases. We have had a couple of reports of leaf diseases and one sample was received at the ISU Plant Disease Clinic with symptoms of holcus spot, caused by the bacterium *Pseudomonas syringae*. Symptoms of holcus spot are light tan (sometimes almost white) round or oval spots on the lower leaves, initially about 1/4 inch in diameter, but sometimes growing larger and coalescing into irregular spots and streaks of dead tissue.

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Anthracnose leaf blight on young corn leaves.

Enlarge [1]

We also have started to see anthracnose lesions on small corn plants. Anthracnose leaf blight (caused by the fungus *Colletotrichum graminicola*) is usually one of the first leaf diseases to appear. The fungus survives in crop residue and its spores are splashed onto the leaves. Anthracnose is definitely more severe where corn follows corn. Symptoms are brown, oval, or elliptical spots (up to about 1/2 inch in length) with a dark brown or purplish border, often surrounded by a yellowed zone. There may be black speckles within the dead tissue. Sometimes the symptoms are limited to the leaf margins. Anthracnose can cause significant damage to very young plants and contributes to postemergence stand loss, but it appears that it has been too cold for this disease to develop much until now. As with the bacterial leaf diseases, we do not expect any economic impact of these early-season leaf infections this year.

Holcus spot on corn.

Enlarge [2]

Holcus leaf spot symptoms on corn.

Enlarge [3]

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