Time to Scout for Stalk and Ear Rots

Alison E. Robertson

Iowa State University, alisonr@iastate.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews

Part of the Agricultural Science Commons, Agriculture Commons, and the Plant Pathology Commons

Recommended Citation

http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews/776

The Iowa State University Digital Repository provides access to Integrated Crop Management News for historical purposes only. Users are hereby notified that the content may be inaccurate, out of date, incomplete and/or may not meet the needs and requirements of the user. Users should make their own assessment of the information and whether it is suitable for their intended purpose. For current information on integrated crop management from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, please visit https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/.
Time to Scout for Stalk and Ear Rots

Abstract
When corn reaches black layer, the crop should be scouted for stalk and ear rots. Anthracnose stalk rot is apparent in many fields across the state and Diplodia ear rot has been reported. The incidence of corn ear rot should be determined before harvest since ear rot diseases can reduce yield and quality of the corn harvest. Furthermore, some of the fungi that infect corn ears may produce mycotoxins, which are harmful, and can be fatal, to livestock.

Keywords
Plant Pathology

Disciplines
Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Plant Pathology

This article is available at Iowa State University Digital Repository: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews/776
Time to Scout for Stalk and Ear Rots

By Alison Robertson, Department of Plant Pathology

When corn reaches black layer, the crop should be scouted for stalk and ear rots. Anthracnose stalk rot is apparent in many fields across the state and Diplodia ear rot has been reported.

The incidence of corn ear rot should be determined before harvest since ear rot diseases can reduce yield and quality of the corn harvest. Furthermore, some of the fungi that infect corn ears may produce mycotoxins, which are harmful, and can be fatal, to livestock.

At least 100 plants, scattered throughout the field, should be assessed. Look for visible symptoms of ear rot by stripping back the husks. For a description and photographs of ear rots you might encounter in the field see corn ear rots. If more than 10 percent of the ears have significant mold that is greater than 25 percent of the ear, the corn should be harvested in a timely manner and dried to below 15 percent moisture as quickly as possible to prevent further mold growth and, in some cases, mycotoxin accumulation.

For stalk rot, at least 100 plants, scattered throughout the field, should be assessed. Test stalk firmness at the lower internodes with thumb and forefinger. If more than 15 percent of the stalks are rotted, schedule for the earliest possible harvest because significant lodging is possible. Scout different hybrids and fields with different tillage, rotation, or fertilization histories separately.

Alison Robertson is an assistant professor of plant pathology with research and extension responsibilities in field crop diseases.

This article was published originally on 9/26/2008. The information contained within the article may or may not be up to date depending on when you are accessing the information.

Links to this material are strongly encouraged. This article may be republished without further permission if it is published as written and includes credit to the author, Integrated Crop Management News and Iowa State University Extension. Prior permission from the author is required if this article is republished in any other manner.