FYI

Assessing Forage Crop Damage From Recent Weather Events (2023)

Crop Scouting Observations & Comments—Aaron Gabriel

We had a very informative soil health tour last week. Download the Soil Health Assessment Packet and call Aaron or Jingjing to help you assess your soil health.

Farmers continue to harvest small grains amid wet weather. Winter wheat and rye are ready and oats are in the late milk stage. There is a risk for pre-harvest sprouting. Here are two regional labs that perform the “falling number” test which determines if pre-harvest sprouting has occurred. They have several other useful grain tests: (UVM), E. E. Cummings Crop Testing Lab, https://www.uvm.edu/extension/nwcrops/cereal-grain-testing-lab, DON, alfalfa toxin, falling number, protein, germination

Hartwick Center for Craft Food & Beverage, https://www.hartwick.edu/about-us/center-for-craft-food-and-beverage/, grain and malt testing
If you are selling seed to someone that will be planting it, you have the legal responsibility to test it for germination and noxious weeds. It is an inexpensive test done at the NYS Seed Testing Lab. Find more information about producing small grains for seed (like cover crop seed) on our blog, Selling Agricultural Seed in New York.

Some oats have lodged and they are maturing. If they are right on the ground there is a risk that they will rot. Some fields have foxtails and other lush weeds growing up through them. Foxtails and many other weeds are edible. Although, once foxtails produce a seed head with pointy awns, that creates a problem for livestock eating it. So, one suggestions is to mow and chop the lodges oats plus weeds for livestock feed. The brown straw of the oats may inhibit a good fermentation, so use an inoculant. Leave the standing oats in the field and harvest them for grain and straw.

Soybeans are flowering and we have some wet and humid weather. White mold infections start in the flower petals. So, determine if your soybean varieties are resistant or susceptible to white mold; look at a 10-day forecast; get the cost of a fungicide application; then decide whether or not you should use fungicide to protect your crop. Remember that white mold fungicides are protectants that prevent spores from establishing. Fungicides for white mold do not kill existing infections. https://cals.cornell.edu/field-crops/soybeans/diseases-soybeans

Wet weather during corn pollination can also lead to ear diseases. Now is also a good time to scout corn for foliar diseases, https://cals.cornell.edu/field-crops/corn/diseases-corn. It is about this time of year that New York has peak flights of the adult western bean cutworm. This insect will infest ears and cause yield damage if numbers are high.