

# Logan Ag News

August 2017

## Japanese Beetles Still Wreaking Havoc

Without question, Japanese beetles have earned the distinction of “Insect of the Year” for 2017. Reports of damage in corn and soybeans, as well as trees, flowers, and ornamentals have been widespread. The only folks who are happy about this invasion are the manufacturers of insecticides used to control these hard-shelled insects. Hundreds of thousands of acres have had insecticide applications, and we anticipate additional spraying as soybeans set pods.

### Japanese Beetle Life Cycle



The Japanese beetle that causes damage is the adult stage of the white grub. In the early part of the growing season each year, white grubs feed on roots of corn and beans before pupating in May and June. The adult beetle emerges in late June and July to feed on corn and soybean foliage before mating and laying eggs in late July/early August. The eggs hatch and burrow deep into the soil where they overwinter.

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## LOCATIONS

- \* Griggsville, IL 217-833-2375; 1-800-LOGAN AG
- \* Pittsburg, OH 937-692-5181 (JACK BAKER)
- \* Paris, MO 660-327-1111 (DEAN OSBORN, MEGAN MORGAN)

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## Dicamba Drift Woes Continue

Illinois and Iowa have joined the states of Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, and others experiencing issues with dicamba drift and/or spray tank contamination. The number of complaints filed with the IL Department of Ag and the Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship has steadily increased over the past several weeks. While most dicamba application to soybeans is – or certainly should be – complete by now, leaf cupping and crinkling and stem twisting is present in many fields of soybeans not planted to Roundup Ready 2 Xtend® varieties. Damage to susceptible plants following dicamba application often does not express itself until 5-7 days later. Retailers and farmers attempting to solve issues among themselves are not included in “official” state reports. Logan Ag is not entirely immune to the dicamba situation, but does feel the number of issues is minor relative to the total acreage involved.

Earlier this season, Missouri and Arkansas banned application of dicamba due to excessive complaints filed with the respective ag departments in each state. Some have speculated that Xtend beans will not be available for planting in 2018. However, that idea is far-fetched as seed production acres are devoted to Xtend soybeans and there is no means by which to produce additional units of LibertyLink®, Roundup Ready 2 Yield®, or non-GMO varieties in time for distribution to growers by planting season.

The point that is seemingly lost in the shuffle is that the technology works, and that weed control with dicamba in Xtend soybeans has been outstanding. Drift reduction agents required for application have performed well. Most of the drift and/or damage issues have occurred when wind speeds are too high or from spray/nurse tank contamination from prior applications. When applied according to label requirements, very few problems have been reported. Additionally, one of the reasons many growers switched to Xtend soybeans was yield. Test plot data from 2016 indicated yield increases of 2 bushels per acre of more, and these soybean varieties feature the newest and best genetics available.

Producers, manufacturers, seed companies, and retailers hope to find viable solutions in advance of the

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White grubs and Japanese beetles are well established in nearly all states east of the Mississippi River, and also in cropping areas of Kansas, Iowa, Missouri and several other states west of the Mississippi.

Many questions surround the record infestation levels of Japanese beetles in 2017. Answers to some of the more common questions follow.

**Why are Japanese beetles such a problem in 2017?** A relatively warm winter of 2016-2017 did not allow ground temperatures to drop to levels that would kill white grubs overwintering in the soil. Many growers no longer use soil-applied insecticides to control secondary pests in corn, and that allowed the large surviving population of white grubs to flourish on roots of corn and soybeans this spring. Seed-applied insecticides provide excellent protection from seed damage and stand loss, but are not potent enough to kill grubs. As a result, the large survival rate of the overwintering population of white grubs was able to feed on roots of plants and then emerge as adult beetles. There are no significant natural enemies.

**Why are adult beetles seemingly concentrated in certain areas and not others?** This question is complicated with no clear-cut answer. It seems earlier planted fields may have greater populations than later planted fields. Local FMC rep Lonnie Fry reports that soybeans replanted in wet holes had considerably fewer numbers of Japanese beetles than the rest of the field. Fields in river bottoms also seem to have more beetles, and some agronomists suggest that dry weather cracks in the gumbo soils (these would have occurred in the summer of 2016) provide better egg laying conditions for female beetles and subsequently better survival of the hatched larvae. Not to be overlooked is the fact that female beetles omit a pheromone that attracts males from long distances. The female lives 30-45 days and mates numerous times, laying as many as 40-60 eggs during her life span. That is one of the reasons that even after fields have been treated with an insecticide (the residual of most insecticides is approximately 7 days) there seems to be a new group of beetles in the field within just a few days. These female Japanese beetles really know how to attract their mates!

**What is the impact of heavy populations in 2017 on the numbers of white grubs and subsequently Japanese beetles in 2018?** Most of the 2018 population of white grubs depends upon the upcoming winter weather. Another relatively mild winter like last year could lead to greater numbers of Japanese beetles in 2018 than ever before. Keep in mind that white grubs feed on plant roots, and can impact growth and development of root hairs upon which the plant depends for uptake of water and nutrients. If drought conditions prevail during the feeding period, the impact on crop growth and subsequent yield could be devastating if grubs are not controlled.

**What are suggested means to control white grubs in corn and soybeans in 2018?** Products containing bifenthrin provide excellent control of white grubs.

These insecticides must be placed in-furrow with starter fertilizer or water in both corn and soybeans. Some formulations are labeled for broadcast application, but



must be incorporated for effective control as the insecticide bonds tightly to soil particles and does not move downward with rainfall. Additionally, it is highly recommended to use available seed-applied insecticides to prevent grub damage to the seed. There is no white grub rescue treatment for corn or soybeans after planting.

Japanese beetles continue to be a problem in soybeans, and can cause significant damage to foliage and pods. Acceptable defoliation levels decrease once pods are formed, and beetles feeding on developing pods cause yield and quality loss. Contact your Logan Ag crop specialist for treatment recommendations.

## Syngenta Corn Lawsuit: Farmers Win 1<sup>st</sup> Round

A Kansas federal court awarded over \$200 million to farmers in a verdict against Syngenta regarding the introduction of Viptera corn prior to Chinese import approval. The Kansas case, brought to court by four farmers representing more than 7000 growers, was the first of thousands of lawsuits against Syngenta. Next up is a case in Minnesota where more than 60,000 growers are to be represented. These bellwether trials are expected to provide guidance to attorneys for farmers and Syngenta in future lawsuits or settlements. Syngenta vows to appeal the Kansas verdict, claiming "American farmers shouldn't have to rely on a foreign government to decide what products they can use on their farms."

## Glyphosate On List Of Potentially Cancerous Chemicals In CA

In a highly contentious move, California state regulators moved to place glyphosate - the active ingredient in Roundup - on its list of potentially cancerous chemicals. This is a precursor to requiring Monsanto to place a label on Roundup stating the chemical is known to cause cancer. Monsanto vigorously defends glyphosate as non-carcinogenic.

The issue in California is due in large part to a report in 2015 from the World Health Organization stating

glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic." However, unpublished scientific research finding no evidence of a link between glyphosate and cancer was never considered by the World Health Organization. The research, according to a leading U.S. epidemiologist and a leading British statistician, is strong in its findings and should have been published for consideration. Had the research been reviewed, it is likely to have altered the report.

Glyphosate is the most widely used herbicide in the world.

## Final Comments

Edward Logan, Logan Ag President

In recent windshield surveys around the area, I've noticed a lot of soybean fields infested with waterhemp around the edges. I assume many of these fields were not planted to soybean varieties with the dicamba or glufosinate (Liberty) trait, and that the weeds present are resistant to multiple herbicides. Our present post-emergence herbicides for waterhemp (glyphosate and PPO herbicides such as Cobra and Flexstar) simply cannot control resistant populations of this invasive weed. The populations of herbicide resistant waterhemp in these fields will spread throughout the field when harvested this fall, and to neighboring fields by birds eating the seeds. It's hard for me to imagine controlling waterhemp and/or other weeds in future soybean crops without dicamba or glufosinate. Even with these herbicides available for post-emerge applications, it is imperative to apply full rates of pre-emerge residual herbicides before or at planting to keep weeds from emerging. Almost equally as important is the application of a labeled residual herbicide with the first post-emerge chemical trip to extend the length of control.

In Missouri where replant corn and soybeans had to be at record levels, we've seen

numerous examples of potash deficiency in fields that likely test in acceptable ranges for soil type. I believe many of these fields suffer from a compaction layer at or below planting depth that is restricting root growth. Some of this compaction is man-made (too wet when replanted) while some is the result of pounding rain and run-off or ponded water. These fields should be scheduled for soil testing immediately following harvest to determine if potash is required to correct future issues.



I recommend grid samples over the entire field to determine if VRT fertilizer application is warranted.



We anticipate fall pre-pay fertilizer prices very soon. For those who typically apply anhydrous ammonia in the fall, I think you will be pleasantly surprised at the early prices which will be at the lowest level in at least a decade.

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR BUSINESS! LET US KNOW HOW AND WHEN WE MAY SERVE YOU AGAIN!**

2018 season to preserve the technology, continue providing consistent control of troublesome broadleaf weeds, and ensure acceptable means of application. Roundup Ready 2 Xtend and Roundup Ready 2 Yield are trademarks of Monsanto. LibertyLink is a trademark of Bayer.

## Farm Futures Surveys Farmers On Yields

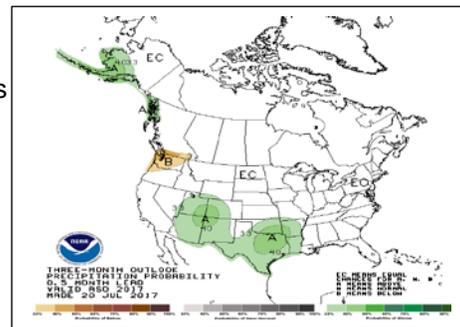
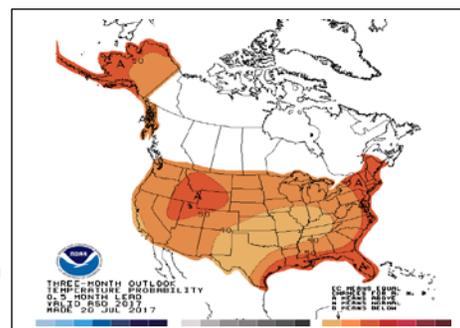
In its late July survey of approximately 1200 growers, Farm Futures estimates corn and soybean production levels will drop in 2017 compared to last year. Farm Futures predicts an average corn yield of 163.5 bushels per acre (13.6 billion bushels) and an average soybean yield of 47.5 bushels per acre (4.214 billion bushels). Total corn production at these levels is down 10% while soybean production is down about 2% compared to 2016.

The Farm Futures survey has average 2.7% difference on corn and 2.4% difference on soybeans from the USDA August production estimates over the past 10 years.

Many western Illinois and eastern Missouri corn fields show significant tip-back on ears where kernels aborted during recent heat/moisture stress periods during pollination. August rains will make or break the soybean crop; however, spotty stands in eastern and central Missouri fields will keep yields well below 2016 levels.

## Harvest Weather Forecast

The National Weather Service fall harvest forecast points to warmer than normal temperatures through October while moisture events should be about normal in the Midwest. The map to the right shows slightly warmer than normal fall temperatures from Texas extending through MO, IL, and IN. The moisture map (lower right) shows mostly normal conditions for fall harvest. This forecast should allow for plenty of good days to complete harvest and initiate fall tillage and apply fertilizer and burndown herbicides in preparation for 2018 planting.



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