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NEWTON COUNTY NEWS
AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

KATHRYN WEISS, PURDUE EXTENSION — NEWTON COUNTY ANR EXTENSION EDUCATOR

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. A new year means new beginnings, and we have quite a few new programs coming up this year. The City Farmer program will be held on January 19, February 23, and March 23 this year. Anyone interested in meeting industry professionals and learning about new and upcoming agriculture topics are encouraged to sign up! Tickets for the 3-night program will be $50/person. For more information or to register, call our office.

This year I am partnering with other educators across the state to offer a virtual Beginning Farmer program every Thursday starting on January 13 until March 10. This program is geared towards people interested in farming but don't know where to start. By attending this program, participants will be able to address the realities of starting a farm, assess their farming assets, and define realistic goals. This workshop is 8 sessions and includes individual work to complete between these sessions. Registration for this program is $75 and is due January 3. For more information or to register let me know!

I am so excited to partner with a few educators to put on the virtual program Farmland for the Next Generation. This program is for people wanting to grow their farm operation but are unsure how to acquire more land. This 5-session virtual program will help you achieve your land acquisition goals. This program will be Monday evenings starting February 21 until March 21, 2022. The cost for this program will be $50. Registration is due February 14. For more information or to register, contact our office or look at the flyer at the end of this newsletter.

Lastly, the "So You've Inherited a Farm, Now What?" program is being offered again in 2022. This program will explore topics such as keeping or selling property and options and financial implications that come with it, how to manage the land if you decide to keep it, appropriate leasing considerations, strategies for dealing with family and communication issues, and legal considerations from Lindsay B. Schmitt, Attorney at Law. Contact me to register or for more information.

As always, if you have any suggestions, comments, questions, or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me at the extension office or by e-mail!

Stay safe and Happy New Year!

Kathryn Weiss
Extension Educator, Agriculture & Natural Resources
Phone: 219-285-8620 ext. 2800
E-mail: weiss44@purdue.edu

Inside This Issue:

Interested in learning more about what we do?

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(219)-285-8620 ext. 2800

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Featured Bug: brown stink bug

Description: Adult brown stink bugs are brown, broad, and somewhat flat. They are shield-shaped, resembling a pentagon. Immature stink bugs look similar to adults, however, they are smaller, somewhat rounder, usually lighter in color, and do not have fully developed wings.

Time of attack: April to mid-August (stages VE-R3)

Damage: Series of identical holes in leaves ringed with a yellow halo, suckering, ear deformity or ear abortion, and overall plant deformity or death. Often more prominent after planting when soil is too wet and seed slots are not closed completely.

Sampling: Early detection is important. If stink bugs are found, inspect 20 seedlings in 5 areas of a field for damage and/or stink bug numbers. If seed slot is open, especially in no-till fields, look for stink bugs near seedlings.

Economic Threshold: None established. Control is most effective if insecticides are applied prior to or at plant emergence.

Reference: Purdue Field Crops IPM, extension.entm.purdue.edu/fieldcropsipm

Photo by: B. Christine—Purdue University

Featured Weed: Eastern black nightshade

Photo from Michigan State University

Life Cycle: Erect, branching summer annual

Leaves: seedlings have small, egg-shaped cotyledons with a pointed tip and a purplish tinge underneath followed by alternate petiolated simple leaves. First leaves are generally smooth, egg-shaped with wavy margins and a purplish tinge underneath; later leaves are slightly hairy, egg– to diamond-shaped with entire to irregularly toothed margins

Stems: Erect and branching, up to 3-foot-tall stems with few hairs

Flowers and Fruit: Flowers are white to purple tinged, star-shaped with five petals fused at the base surrounding five bright yellow anthers; found in downward facing clusters. Berries are glossy black at maturity and globe shaped and contain up to 110 seeds.

Reproduction: Seeds

Toxicity: All plant parts are toxic to animals/

For more information, visit: https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/eastern-black-nightshade-solanum-ptycanthum

Corn planting considerations for 2022

Written by: Dan Quinn, Ph.D

The key to maximizing corn yield is largely driven by minimizing the impact of potential yield-limiting factors during the growing season. The moment the corn seed is moved into the planter and placed into the ground in the spring, yield-limiting factors begin to go to work to limit potential corn yield. Being able to identify ***your*** specific yield-limiting factors and how to manage them is an important step in producing consistent and high corn yields. The goal of the planter is to optimize seed placement, depth, spacing, and seed-to-soil contact. Corn must achieve rapid, uniform emergence, with equidistant spacing in order to get off on the right foot to maximize yield later in the season. If corn does not get off to a good start, the crop is likely already a step behind, and maximum yield potential may already be out of reach early in the season.

What factors influence corn germination and emergence?

1. Soil Temperature – variable soil temperature at planting can cause variable corn emergence, especially when corn is planted in temperatures that hover around 50° Variable corn emergence can reduce corn yield upwards of 10%. Variable soil temperatures can be caused by variable seed depth, soil conditions, residue levels, and weather patterns.
2. Soil Moisture – like soil temperature, variable soil moisture at planting can also cause variable corn emergence. Variable soil moisture can be caused by variable seed depth, soil conditions, residue levels, and weather patterns.
3. Seed-to-soil Contact – good seed-to-soil contact is required for seeds to imbibe water and germinate. Poor seed-to-soil contact as a result of residue interference, planting too wet, and improper furrow closure can cause variable corn emergence and germination.
4. Seed Depth – the depth the seed is planted can directly determine the conditions in which the seed is planted into. Seeds planted too shallow may be planted into soil conditions that are too dry and/or too cold, whereas a seed planted too deep may be planted into soil conditions too wet. Planting seeds at improper depths and into improper conditions can result in variable seed germination and emergence.

What planter equipment should a farmer invest in?

As harvest finishes this fall, and focus begins to shift to planting next spring, a popular question is often, which equipment upgrades should I add to my planter? Planter manufacturers continue to introduce new tools and technologies to improve spring planting performance, yet it can often become confusing when choosing which equipment to add, especially since this decision is often a significant investment for many. Choosing which upgrades or changes need to be made to your planter, starts by identifying specific planting or crop stand establishment issues ***you*** already have. There is no singular piece of equipment or technology that works for every farmer, in every field, and in every situation. For example, do ***you*** currently have difficulty with non-uniform seeding depth? Then, it is possible the row-unit down pressure system needs to be checked or upgraded. Or, do ***you*** have difficulty with poor furrow closure, poor seed-to-soil contact, or residue interference? Then, it is possible the row cleaner or closing wheel systems needs to be checked or upgraded. Lastly, it is also important every year to thoroughly examine, diagnose, and maintain the certain parts or problems the planter ***currently*** has. Improper maintenance and worn-out parts can cause planting issues as well, that frankly an upgrade in new technology may not help.