

# SHELBY COUNTY CROP TALK

May 1, 2020

## Crop Scout:

The weather this past week was mostly uncooperative for fieldwork, although some planters were rolling. Assuming 110 GDUs until emergence, corn planted in southcentral Indiana on the April 28 would emerge May 10. The growing point could be below ground almost two weeks. Since April 1<sup>st</sup>, we have accumulated less than 180 GDUs. As of April 27, USDA reports that wheat crop development has been lagging due to cool weather. However, the Indiana corn crop was reported at 18 % planted with 1 % emerged and soybeans at 11 % planted.

## Wheat Growth Staging

With spring planting in full swing, it is tempting to push wheat to the backburner. If you have less than ideal planting conditions in the coming days, take a closer look at your wheat crop. Start by identifying the growth stage. Purdue has a pocket Wheat Field Guide (ID-448) that I carry anytime I visit a wheat field. Here are some important tips and stages to consider.

Wheat is staged using the Feekes Growth Scale (FGS). While 11 stages are illustrated, we will mainly focus on a few sub levels. A field is classified at a stage when 50% of the plants in the field are at that particular maturity.



The above images of are a field at Feekes 6.



Figure 12. Wheat head at Feekes 10.5.1/ beginning flowering growth stage.

Figure 13. Wheat head at Feekes 10.5.2/ flowering growth stage.

Figure 14. Wheat head at Feekes 10.5.3/ full flower growth stage.

Above are some images of Feekes Stages 10.5.1-10.5.3. These images are from the University of Kentucky.

the head is just starting to poke out near the top leaf or flag leaf. Consider contacting Shelby Co Co-op at boot stage to line-up a timely, application.

To date, the predominant stage locally has been FGS 6. At FGS 6, the first node will often feel like a swollen bump at the base of the main plant stem. Generally, this stage is roughly a month out from the optimal time to spray fungicide in wheat. Fungicide application is most effective at the start of flowering, FGS 10.5.1. This can be determined by anthers emerging in the middle third of the wheat head. As the plant advances through 10.5, the top anthers will then emerge, followed by those near the bottom of the head.



Boot stage of wheat

About 10 days prior to heading is the boot stage. At this stage,

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For more information on wheat growth stages, view the references from the University of Kentucky and Penn State below.

## More Wheat Management

Often, the primary wheat disease targeted by a fungicide application is head scab. Fusarium head scab will reduce the overall quality of the wheat and flour that is produced from it. University plant disease specialists point to three fungicides for best controlling head scab in wheat: Prosaro, Caramba, and Miravis Ace. These should ideally be sprayed at FGS 10.5.1 for best results. You have a 5-6-day window from 10.5.1 to get fungicide on for good results. Miravis can be sprayed right at head emergence but, it is roughly five more dollars per acre to spray this product. These products will also help protect against other diseases that may be present in the field.



*Here is an example of frost damage in wheat similar to what I have observed lately.*

Pathologist, we believe that some fields will have significant freeze damage, especially in no-till situations. Any yield impact should be minimal. If you have a field that was damaged by frost, look at the lower stem for a bruised appearance and collapsing tissue, as well as dead growing point.

Last week I mentioned that I have seen some frost damage in wheat fields. After close observation of several fields and speaking with Purdue Plant

If you have any questions about your wheat crop, please give me a call. I would be happy to come out and look with you. My contact info can be found at the bottom of the page.

Wheat Resources:

- University of Kentucky Wheat Stages
  - [https://mccracken.ca.uky.edu/files/identifying\\_wheat\\_growth\\_stages\\_agr224.pdf](https://mccracken.ca.uky.edu/files/identifying_wheat_growth_stages_agr224.pdf)
- Penn State Wheat Stage Video
  - <https://extension.psu.edu/identifying-wheat-stages-for-fungicide-application>
- Kansas State Frost Damage
  - [https://webapp.agron.ksu.edu/agr\\_social/eu\\_article.throck?article\\_id=1770](https://webapp.agron.ksu.edu/agr_social/eu_article.throck?article_id=1770)

## **Pandemic Effects**

To this point, our team has experienced some disruption from the ongoing pandemic. We hope you have had little trouble. However, some folks have been affected significantly. Beth Tharp of Legan Livestock & Grain blogged this about the crisis in the pork industry.

<https://www.ltfarmmeats.com/post/of-food-shortages-euthanasia-and-the-like>



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