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ASIAN SOYBEAN RUST UPDATE: 10 July 2008

On 8 July, Len Young, soybean rust program assistant at the University of Georgia in Tifton, confirmed Asian soybean rust on 5 of 58 soybean leaves submitted to us by a private agricultural researcher from a research farm in Brooks County. Ms. Young used microscopy and Enviroligix immunoassay strips for confirmation of the rust pustules. Severity of rust was low on each leaf (1% or less) and the private researcher reported only finding the rust on Monday, 7 July. We appreciate greatly the cooperation with the ag consultant in Brooks County; without his cooperation this rust would have gone without notice to our grower community. **NO OTHER SOYBEAN RUST IS KNOWN IN GEORGIA AT THIS TIME.**

The conditions under which the rust was found at the private research site are unique for Georgia and are atypical of commercial practices and conditions in our sentinel plots.

- A. The MG VI variety in which rust was detected was planted on 2 April.
- B. The plots where the rust was found are now at R3-R4 growth stage (pod formation).
- C. The plots are maintained in order to increase chances of rust development for research purposes—they are heavily irrigated at least 3 times per week to create ideal conditions for disease.

At this point, growers in southern Georgia should recognize that the potential for rust exists; however they do not need to panic. Rust has NOT yet been found to spread aggressively in Florida along the Georgia line, although it has been known for weeks.

Recommendation: Growers should be prepared to use an effective fungicide program when 1) rust becomes more active in the region, 2) their crop reaches reproductive growth (hopefully not earlier than late R2 full bloom) or early R3 (pod set) or 3) as they apply dimilin and boron.

Yes, rust is present in Georgia now, BUT it is developing slowly. Applying a fungicide too early may not offer any significant protection from rust and will likely require growers to apply multiple sprays during the season.