THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Family and Consumer Sciences

Seminole Crop News

Tillers = Heads of Wheat

January 27, 2012

Wheat has grown very well this year where it has adequate fertility and moisture. Now's the time to count tillers per square foot to make sure we have plenty out there because tillers = heads of wheat . Most of our wheat is drilled in 7.5 inch rows so just measure 19 inches down and count tillers. We want 80 to 100 tillers per square foot, and if we don't have that now , it would be good to go ahead with an early split sidedress Nitrogen application. And then come back in mid February with the rest of your nitrogen.

If you have plenty of tillers then you can just wait until the 2nd week of February to put all your sidedress N out.

This well tillered plant has 5 tillers that will grow grain.

Count the number of tillers in 19 inches down the row if your row spacing is 7.5 inches.

Aphids in Wheat

January 27, 2012

Aphids in fields I've been looking at are low in number, but increasing.

Yesterday we saw a good many aphids in wheat fields that had been parasitized by tiny wasps and were taken out of commission.

Aphids can be a real problem in wheat due to the fact that they transmit Barley Yellow Dwarf disease besides the fact that they damage the plant through direct feeding.

We need to be scouting our fields to evaluate aphid levels. Here's some info from the UGA Pest Control Handbook.

Inspect fields at 25-35 days after planting, full tiller, and heading.

Yield-reducing transmission of Barley Yellow Dwarf virus can occur during first two periods; transmission at heading is too late to reduce yield.

Aphid treatment thresholds are:
Seedlings (2 per row ft.),
6-10 inch plants (6 per row ft.),
Stem elongation (2 per stem),
Flag leaf (5 per flag),
Heading (10 per head to include flag),
Soft/Hard Dough stages (Do not treat).

Question of the Week – Mistletoe

January 27, 2012

Yes, Mistletoe is good and bad. Good for kisses and bad for trees.

I get questions a good bit about mistletoe in trees and if it hurts them. One of my fellow north Georgia county agents, Paul Pugliese, wrote the following article about mistletoe.

Mistletoe is often used postmortem to lure unsuspecting sweethearts to a Christmastime kiss. For the other 364 days of the year, it is actually considered an infectious parasite that kills trees.

If you see green leaves in the top of deciduous trees, it might be mistletoe.

Mistletoe is an evergreen, parasitic plant found on a wide host of trees, including alder, birch, cottonwood, maple, oak, hickory and elm. Mistletoe gets water and nutrients from the host tree, but it is not totally dependent.

Leaves of mistletoe contain chlorophyll and are capable of making their own food from carbon dioxide and water. Birds feed on mistletoe berries and deposit them on new trees in their droppings. This is how mistletoe spreads from tree to tree. When the seeds germinate, they grow through the bark and into the vascular system of the host where it obtains water and minerals.

Mistletoe can be particularly stressful to trees during drought conditions. Trees that are heavily infested by mistletoe for several years may lose vigor, become stunted or even killed. This is especially true if the tree is already subjected to drought stress, harsh winter conditions, construction injury, diseases, insects or other conditions that further weaken the tree.

Mistletoe grows slowly at first and may take years to produce seeds. Healthy trees can tolerate small mistletoe infestations, but individual branches might be compromised and susceptible to wind or snow breakage.

Simply removing mistletoe will provide some protection from spreading. However, if you remove only the mistletoe, it will probably regrow.

To effectively control mistletoe, prune the tree one to two feet beyond the point of attachment. If the mistletoe is located on a main limb or trunk, remove the top of the mistletoe and wrap the cut with an opaque plastic to prevent sunlight. Since mistletoe requires light, it will die within a couple of years. It might be necessary to repeat this treatment, especially if the wrapping becomes detached or the mistletoe is not completely killed.

This week I want to ask about this photo. What is going on in this field a farmer called me to look at yesterday where he had recently planted an oat cover crop that was up about an inch tall?

La Nina impact

January 26, 2012

After hearing 3 good climate talks lately, I think I finally got it.

La Nina, low ocean temperatures in the Pacific, means a good possibility of higher temperatures and drier for us in winter and spring, and El Nino the opposite. Neither mean anything for weather past the end of May.

Whew, it has taken me a while to understand it. I do see that we are in the La Nina phase now and it has been warmer and drier than normal. Melissa Griffin, Florida Assistant State Climatologist, spoke at our Blessed Harvest Farmer Appreciation Breakfast today in Donalsonville. She shared that according to their crop modeling, a La Nina year is conducive to higher corn yields, with the warmer spring and dry sunny weather. Go to the Agroclimate site for details: http://agroclimate.org/

Melissa shared a graphic similar to this one explaining proof of global warming and she said it may also be related to a reduced demand for cotton. lol.

Later,

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