U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative

FHB Tool Talk

Dear Extension, Crop Consultants, and Grower Organizations,

Spring wheat and durum are heading and flowering around the U.S. and now is the time to start thinking about managing Fusarium head blight (FHB) and its associated mycotoxin deoxynivalenol (DON). While making management decisions, here are some important tips to keep in mind.

1. **If the risk is high, two fungicide applications may be helpful.** Research suggests that two applications using different fungicides will generally result in greater disease reduction in spring wheat and durum. However, in several studies one well timed application of a good fungicide was just as effective as two fungicide applications. Given the additional input costs associated with a second fungicide application, it may be best to apply a fungicide once during the seven-day application window (i.e. start of early flowering and up to seven days later). See the [Fungicide Timing Postcards](#) to correctly identify growth stages in spring wheat and durum.

2. **The best durum varieties should be viewed as moderately susceptible.** When using the [FHB Risk Tool](#) change the susceptibility of your variety by clicking the bulleted list icon button located in the top left corner of the map.

3. **If your field contains two to three different growth stages, the best fungicide application timing is 5 to 7 days after the earliest growth stages begin flowering.** Our research efforts through the USWBSI have indicated that this is the best timing for FHB suppression. For example, if 40% of your field is at early flowering today, 40% is at full-head, and 20% is at half-head, applying a fungicide in 3 to 5 days may be your best option. This will allow most of the heads to be within a fungicide application window to suppress FHB and DON, while protecting yield.

4. **A pattern of rainy weather with mild temperatures during spring wheat flowering may not necessitate a fungicide application.** Farmers are encouraged to use both crop growth stage, field cropping history, and the FHB Risk Tool to determine the risk of FHB in spring wheat as many areas are often at low risk going into flowering. Remember to take into account the susceptibility or resistance rating of your wheat variety. The more innate (genetic) resistance to FHB a variety has, the lower its over-all risk for damage from FHB.

5. **If you planted your spring wheat or durum following corn, consider fungicide application a standard practice.** Hard white spring wheat and durum are the most susceptible to infection by *F. graminearum*. Even with the least susceptible varieties of hard white spring wheat, growers should consider standard applications of effective fungicides at anthesis. That risk increases when corn production occurs locally. In some years, corn residue can serve as a source of inoculum from 10-30 miles away.

6. Consider shutting off irrigation. Where soil moisture reserves can be built up in finer textured soils, shut off the irrigation for 5-7 days during anthesis and apply an effective fungicide particularly to the circle surrounding the first tower of the center pivot where the highest duration of irrigation and disease occurs.
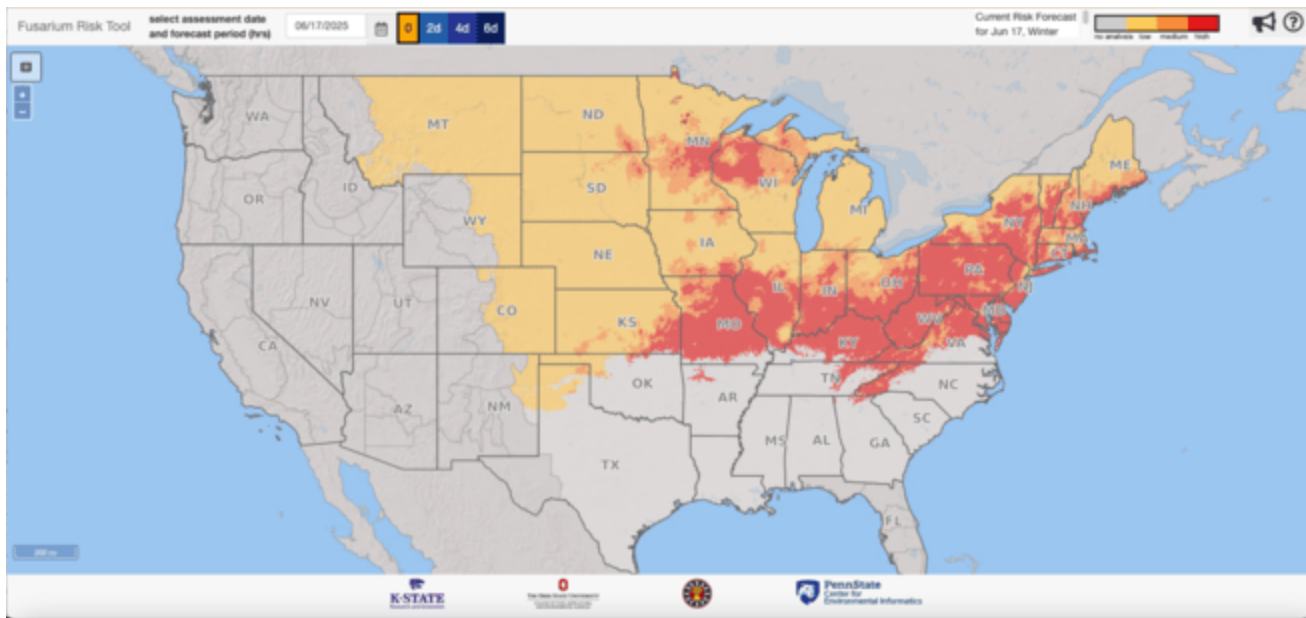
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