NCSRP
NORTH CENTRAL SOYBEAN RESEARCH PROGRAM

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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Record participation at NCSRP-sponsored soybean rust workshop

Asian soybean rust continues to be a major concern for North American farmers, agri-business professionals and researchers, who came in record numbers to this year's two-day Asian soybean rust short course in Quincy, Florida.

The workshop, held at the North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy, Florida, drew 103 participants from the 12 north central states, as well as several other soybean producing states across the United States.

Participants learned about subjects such as soybean rust identification, control strategies, how weather affects rust and progress towards rust-resistant genetics.

"Farmers have identified continuing training and education in soybean rust identification and management as a priority," says Dr. David Wright, director of research for the North Central Soybean Research Program, which sponsored the course.

"These are tough economic times, and farmers realize a better understanding of soybean rust can help them be more profitable," he says. "Misdiagnosis of the disease and spraying when not necessary can all be costly. The participants in this program now know how to identify and manage the disease, and can share this knowledge with others."

The short course – and an intensive research program -- started in 2005, in response to the discovery of Asian soybean rust in the United States the previous year.

The course has been designed to equip industry members with skills to identify Asian soybean rust, to understand its development and infection details, and to learn how to manage it.

"In South Dakota, rumors of Asian soybean rust cost growers thousands of dollars and unnecessary spraying," says Dr. Larry Osborne, South Dakota State University extension plant pathologist. Adds his counterpart Dr. Sam Markell, North Dakota State University: "With this course, a crop consultant or even a neighbor can have the ability to look at a disease in a crop and say it is or isn't soybean rust. That can save farmers a lot of money."

Presentations were made this year by researchers from the University of Florida, Penn State University, Ohio State University, the Federal University of Vicosa, Brazil, the USDA and Bayer Crop Science.

Through this training and education program and other Asian soybean rust workshops at the North Florida Research and Education Center, more than 650 industry personnel have learned how to prevent, detect and manage the disease.

"We originally thought this would be a one-time course," says Wright, "but the interest in Asian soybean rust is still very strong. We will continue to meet the demand for education, training and information."

Likewise, the research program at Quincy has proven popular with the industry. In just four years, scientists have logged 75 research-years of studies at the center, which has become a focal point for cooperative soybean rust research in North America.

The Plant Health Initiative represents a cooperative partnership between soybean checkoff boards and land grant universities from 12 north central states. The initiative's goal is to act as a resource that collects and dispenses valuable management information on a variety of soybean pests and diseases. The Plant Health Initiative receives its funding through soybean checkoff

dollars, and is administered by the North Central Soybean Research Program (NCSRP), its primary sponsor.