

NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE MID-SEASON FIELD EVALUATIONS

07/02/2018

- Mid-season field evaluations can help explain some of the yield variability we may experience at harvest time.
- Evaluating the efficacy of your herbicide program can provide information on what worked and what can be changed to achieve desired control of your problematic weeds.
- Mid- season is also the time to scout for diseases and insects, evaluate economic thresholds and start creating in-season management plans if pressure warrants.

If you have not yet done so, now is a good time to go out and record some mid-season field notes. These notes will be valuable at harvest to help explain some of the yield differences we may see between and within fields. Areas of the field that may have looked pretty rough a few weeks ago are looking more uniform as the crop grows and the thin areas are less visible. Spots where weed control was not adequate or where stand was thin or growing less vigorously due to disease, insect damage, compaction, flooding, etc., can turn into areas with reduced yields. However, unless we keep track of what happened and when, it is hard to attribute lower than expected yields to these possible causes. A few in-season notes recorded about these areas will help you better understand any yield differences that result from potential problem fields. Another benefit of keeping field notes is that you may be able to determine which issues show up consistently year after year and come up with a plan to protect yields from these recurrent issues.

As spray season begins to wind down, it is important to make time to evaluate your overall herbicide program. What worked well? What didn't? What could you have done differently to make your weed control program more successful? What changes do you plan to make for your weed control program next year? These questions may address product choices, application rates, application timing, or all three. Additionally, application of foliar fungicides to both corn and soybean fields will begin soon if disease pressure warrants and the environment is conducive to disease development. We are also starting to see more soybean defoliation by insects in some areas and may start seeing insect damage to corn silks in areas where Japanese beetle and corn rootworm beetle pressure is heavy. Scouting is a must to determine if the damage or insect pest numbers are at or above the economic threshold and if the crop is at a stage where insecticide application warrants. Your local FS crop specialist can help you determine

the need for a fungicide or insecticide application on your fields and can provide you with a list of options for efficacious products and tools that fit you individual needs. It is still too early in the growing season to hang up your hats. Many fields that looked rough earlier in the season look much better today! Stick with your plans for producing top yields, and remember next year's decisions start very soon.