Wednesday – June 10, 2020

BILL: And welcome into another edition of Ag Talk. It’s Wednesday, that means it’s a wheat Wednesday. And today Ed, we are talking about diseases and insects associated with wheat. And a word that popped up yesterday is going to pop up again here today.

ED: Fusarium comes back again. A very similar organisms this time it is attacking wheat. Really I just want to talk about wheat Wednesday. What we have now is what we are going to have till harvest. But the disease we going to be a discussion is possibly Fusarium head scab. We really have the weather conditions at flowering for this to move in. We also have some pretty good conditions for farmers to get out there and spray fungicide in a timely matter so hopefully we are going to protect a lot of these heads. In about a week from now we are going to see how much head scab we actually have in there because if the wheat is still green the head scab infected kernels will look bleached and so we’ll be able to see how much of that head actually got the disease. This is probably the first time in a long time that the whole county was really vulnerable weather-wise and inoculum-wise for this disease to occur. We’ve had pockets in the past but the whole county was at risk this year. The other thing that comes in talking that people may always run into is in the insect world is what we call armyworms. Armyworms are veracious eaters. They can take all the leaves off of the plant. The thing about armyworms are they come in late enough in the season that most of the photosynthesis we are going to lose from their feeding damage is not going to cause your yield lose that great cause the plant has already absorbed most of that. And of course if you have awns on the wheat, that is the little needle like structures on the ends of the kernels, they still can do photosynthesis and they tend to not eat them. They can really look bad on the damage they have done in your field but generally economically we can’t justify the spray. There is occasionally we hear stories where they actually clip the head, it bites the stem holding the head up and it falls to the ground, and it may do some damage on the flag leaves. But still economically generally we will come out ahead by not buying the insecticide. The other concern we have with armyworms though, most of the insecticides are going to have a harvest interval of thirty days. In other words, after I apply the insecticide I have to wait thirty days. We are virtually within that thirty days and the farmer doesn’t want to wait so they won’t spray it because the harvest interval of the spray. The other thing interesting about armyworms though is when we get our wheat off they may move from the wheat and attack young corn fields and devour them and so you may need to look at the corn field that is adjacent to your wheat field if you do have armyworms out there. But really at this time we are just set up for the rest of the year to just let things go but you might see some disease and insects out there and so time will tell.

BILL: Thank you Ed. For Ag Talk this is Bill Rice along with Ed Lentz. Good morning to you.

Ed: Good morning.