Friday – June 26, 2020

BILL: And good morning and welcome into our Friday edition of Ag Talk. This is Bill Rice along with Ed Lentz. Yesterday we talked about leafhoppers, today we go to bagworms, Ed.

ED: We’re off the farm even though bagworms can happen on the farm with our windbreaks we have out there with our conifers but this is the time period that if you got bagworms if they are feeding it’s time to think about spraying them. Most of the time the people don’t see the little bagworms. They are small enough at this time but they do see the overwintering bags where they are coming out of. So if they didn’t pull those bags off over the winter, they can feel pretty certain that go little worms that we call crawlers that have come out of those bags and are going to start and they are going to be feeding on there typically a conifer such as a arborvitae or a spruce tree but they can be on a lot of different trees. The thing about it, Bill, is one bag can have 500 to 1000 crawlers emerge from it. They are going to feed on the foliage and they are going to feed for most of the summer and so they can do quite a bit of damage. And this year particularly they may even do more damage because it’s dry and so this tree is already stressed and then you have something feeding on its needles and leaves, it’s going to stress it more. Generally speaking we have choices with insecticides. We can use Bt, which a lot of people like it because it only attacks insects from the moth and butterfly family and leaves all other insects alone. But to do this the crawlers have got to be in a small stage. And when we look at the young crawlers they almost like buds, like a little dunce cap on them as they are working and that’s what you’ll see cause it will be a little different color. Later on the bag is going to look more like the plant. If that bag is less than three quarters of an inch we can use Bt very effectively or we at least we may have to take two applications of Bt but Bt is an alternative choice. However, once it gets longer the three quarters of an inch to an inch there, we’re going to have to use a regular insecticide. And a downside of that is it will kill all the insects on that tree that you sprayed as well the bagworms but if you don’t control the bagworms they can really take a tree out on you. And basically we got from now until the end of July when they are going to pupate that we can get the insecticide on. The sooner or the earlier the smaller the bagworms size now a lot better control. The later we wait we may miss some things and have problems. I really stress for people to go out there and check and if they have those bags they probably got the worms that are going to be feeding on those. You can’t ignore this if it’s bad enough it can really damage a tree this year. It will take out a tree in a few years so check them for bagworms.

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

Ed: Good morning.