



Michigan Crop Improvement Association
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Michigan Seed Bulletin

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The Official Seed Certifying Agency

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A New Edible Bean Disease on the Radar

BY CHRIS TIEDJE

From COVID 19 to tar spot, diseases are becoming a consuming focus and challenge for producers. Dry edible beans are not unique. In 2021 a relatively unheard-of disease re-emerged and was observed in Michigan – bacterial wilt. Bacterial diseases such as common blight and halo blight have always been a threat to dry bean production in Michigan. As climactic conditions change and evolve, the microenvironments also change, which affects the specific disease which might be best suited to attack dry bean plants. Common blight is more likely to appear when temperatures are 83 to 89 degrees, and the air is humid. Bacterial wilt prefers warmer temperatures of 90 to 99 degrees with dry weather. Symptoms of bacterial wilt look very similar to that of drought stress but are actually bacterial in nature and not due to lack of moisture. Lesions usually begin as yellow or brown areas between the leaf veins and can lead to plant wilting and eventually plant death. Seed from an infected plant will often show brown, orange or yellow lesions, and are especially prevalent in white seeded types which may make the product difficult to market. True verification in the field is often difficult to establish and may require lab testing for confirmation.

Commercial producers should be aware of this new disease and submit samples for testing if suspected. MCI inspectors will be looking for this disease in the field to verify that Michigan certified seed is clean. If suspected areas are found, tissue analysis will be performed to confirm. Water soaking of leaf tissue is a common symptom of bacteria, resulting in black clinging leaves after the disease has run its course. As with any bacterial disease, suspected areas are identified in the field, and will be isolated to keep the remaining portion of the seed clean. Seed is tested following harvest for each disease to verify inspection activity. This is just another reason why planting certified seed is of paramount importance to raising a profitable dry bean crop.



Great northern dry bean seeds affected by pathogen color variants (clockwise from bottom) orange, purple, yellow, and uninfected. | Photos by Univeristy of Nebraska-Lincoln



Necrotic and wavy yellow border symptoms associated with bacterial wilt.

Calendar of Events

February 15 *MCIA Office*
Changes due for Spring Seed Orders

March 8 *Eagle Eye Banquet Center, Bath, MI*
MCIA Annual Membership Meeting

April 15 *MCIA Office*
Year-in-advance Seed Orders Due
Membership Application Due

April 19 & 20 *Lafayette, IN*
AOSCA Regional Meeting

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The President's Post

BY CHRIS SCHMIDT, MCIA PRESIDENT



We've all been at this long enough to know that every growing season is different. Where "different" at the 10,000-foot view is defined as just about anything that carries an impact with it: such as weather, supply, demand, availability, and anything else that affects the grower community in general.

But it's been years since I've felt bombarded by nearly every grower I interact with where their concern is the exceptionally high, and ever increasing, cost of crop production inputs. And when that conversation wanes it's replaced by a chorus of "will I even be able to get Liberty, RoundUp, starter fertilizer, Prosaro?" and so on. These aggravated comments are never directed at anyone personally but rather they're mostly a vent for growers frustrated with any number of things that they have no control over. And that's the greatest frustration of all... that no one feels they have control over their livelihoods and these growers are looking for cropping suggestions/options that will provide the best economic return to their farming operations.

Farmers are inherently smart, clever, resourceful individuals who will eventually find the right solutions for their farms. Some of the solutions will be unconventional. Some solutions will be things that should have been done a long time ago. Some solutions will result in long term pencil sharpening that, hopefully, will result in stronger, leaner farming enterprises for the long haul.

But (and there's always a "but") this is also a great opportunity for all of us

MCIA Annual Meeting

Please make plans to attend our "2021/2022" MCIA Annual Membership Meeting on March 8th at the Eagle Eye Banquet Center in Bath, Michigan. Along with hearing from the MSU Plant Breeders, we will have three other exciting speakers. Toby Brown from Premier Seed Group (current MCIA Board member) will enlighten us on his capacity with the Michigan seed corn growers and his Company's role in the seed corn industry. Lisa Woodke, Sustainability Director from Star of the West will discuss opportunities regarding carbon credits and other emerging ecosystem services markets. Finally, Dr. Tim Boring, FSA State Executive Director, will present his views from

atop Michigan Agriculture. We will also have the results of the Board of Directors election where two candidates, Matt Lutz from Sebewaing and Teresa Berden Clarkson from Snover will be running for the open thumb region where Mark Vollmar has served previously. Incumbent Chris Schmidt from Auburn will be running un-opposed in the northern Region. Members, please watch your mailbox for more detailed information on these candidates as well as your official ballot. Please call the office to join us and reserve your complimentary lunch ticket or register online at www.michcrop.com! **CCA and RUP Credits will be available.**

Michigan certified seed producers to double down on our quality and customer service focus. The grower angst that we hear at our local coffee shops should serve as direction for all of us, both in the short term as well as for the long term. Think about the skinny margins our customers are facing and how we can fill their seed needs with high quality, reasonably priced, readily available seed backed with supporting regional data from our land grant university, Michigan State University. The hand wringing will cease soon enough, planting decisions will be made and each of us will know we've played a hand helping our farmer brethren be more successful in 2022.

MCIA Loses Two Good Friends

We are saddened to report two of MCIA's honorary members recently passed away. Bob Clarke, who served on the MCIA Board of Directors from 1997 to 2005 and was awarded the MCIA Honorary Membership award in 2012 lost his battle with cancer on November 29, 2021, he was 76.

Dr. Larry Copeland a longtime friend of MCIA, Professor Emeritus at MSU, and the 1988 recipient of the MCIA honorary membership award passed away on December 31, 2021 he was 85. We will miss both of these fine gentlemen and are thankful for all they did for the seed industry and MCIA.

Manager's Minute

BY C. JAMES PALMER, MCIA MANAGER



In late August, my wife ordered my youngest son a new bat for his birthday from a popular bat company. This was the newest whiz bang bat which was advertised to hit the ball further and faster than the previous model. The new bat was customizable which allowed us to design the color scheme and have our son's name and number proudly displayed somewhere on the bat. The bat had a 4-6-week lead time, which meant he might not have it for his September birthday, but he would certainly get it in time to use in his late fall baseball tournaments. Week after week, our son would get home from school and check to see if the shiny new bat arrived, but week after week he was disappointed. Finally, in mid-October, my wife revealed to me that the company emailed her to let her know the bat order was cancelled and a refund was issued. The email disclosed the reason for the cancellation was that the parts for the previous model were no longer being manufactured and the company had switched over to the "2022" model. After several weeks of back and forth pleading with the company to find us a bat to fulfill the order, it became clear we would not be receiving the bat we ordered two months prior. We placed the order for a customized model 2022 bat which was promised in.... wait for it...6-8 weeks. So, the countdown to the new bat began again with my son frequently checking with his mother and me about the status of this bat. After some further inquiries with this bat company around Thanksgiving, we were told the lead time for the bat was now 8-12 weeks and we would be notified when it would be shipped. Christmas passed, New Years passed, still no bat, and then a glimmer of hope arrived in an email from the company in late January. The bat was made, and it would be shipped the 24th of January! As the days ticked by it seemed surreal to reflect on all the trouble, we had to endure to willingly pay someone to purchase this item. The wait was going to be worth it though as with just a little more patience, the elusive bat would arrive. Fast forward to January 31, 2022, and I am bewildered to tell you the bat still has not arrived. Another futile attempt at getting answers from the customer service department revealed the person who emailed regarding the status was mistaken and the bat had neither been made nor shipped. My wife is adamant we just cancel the order and buy a bat from a different outlet, but I am too stubborn to give up now after all the waiting we have done. However, she is probably right. Reflecting on the situation, it really illustrates the interesting times we are living in today. I cannot say for certain, but I can't imagine any reputable company would have behaved this way in 2019 or before. I can say with certainty, had this happened two years ago, I would have never even considered letting this situation fester as it has. I struggle to find any silver lining in this experience, however, the lessons it taught me are last minute purchases in this environment are a fool's errand, planning is of paramount importance, and patience is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. Here at Michigan Crop Improvement, we are proactively planning, anticipating hiccups in the supply chain, and thinking of ways to serve you better in these times where mediocre customer service, sadly, has become the norm.



News from the Lab

BY JOYCE HIEBERT



As you all know, the 2021 harvest for soybeans was rough. We are seeing the results of that here in the lab with lower-than-normal germination averages of 81%. Treatment with Thiabendazole is bringing up those germination numbers to 88%. Predominantly, we are seeing pod & stem blight disease which will diminish over time in storage. We recommend having your soybeans re-tested closer to planting time.

Hybrid seed corn remains strong with average germinations of 98%.

If you have any questions or concerns about testing or treatment options, don't hesitate to contact the lab!

Fun Fact

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the largest sandwich ever created weighed 5,440 lb. and was made by Wild Woody's Chill and Grill, Roseville, Michigan, USA on March 17, 2005. The sandwich contained 150 lbs. of mustard, 1,032 lbs. of corned beef, 260 lbs. of cheese, 530 lbs. of lettuce and 3,568 lbs. of bread. The sandwich measured 17.5 in. thick, was 12 ft. long and 12 ft. wide.



That's a BIG sandwich.