LOUISIANA CROPS NEWSLETTER

Cotton, Corn, Soybeans, Sorghum, and Wheat

LSU AgCenter Research · Extension · Teaching

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Wheat Variety Performance and Production Practices in Louisiana

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Wheat acreage in Louisiana was an estimated 40,000 acres in 2016. This was down 63% from 2015, and the lowest in 37 years. This was due in part to poor planting conditions and low prices. Rainfall during flowering resulted in moderate to severe scab epidemics across the wheat producing regions of the state. Results from the LSU AgCenter Official Variety Trials are listed in the 2016 Small Grain Performance Trials publication: http://www.lsuagcenter.com/profiles/lblack/articles/page1471977873895

Variety selection:

Choice of varieties for planting is a crucial management decision that sets the stage for yield potential and input costs. Since the 2016 and 2015 seasons were atypical and yields were poor, producers should place more emphasis on yield means over two or even three years within their region (North or South Louisiana). While grain yield is the most important factor, test weight, disease resistance, and heading date are also important considerations as they also impact economic return.

Test weight is important because low test weights result in dockage at the elevator. Heading day is an indication of cold requirement (vernalization) and day length (photoperiod) requirement that determines when a variety heads out. Some varieties head very late or not at all in south Louisiana due to a long vernalization requirement or photoperiod response, while those same varieties perform well in north Louisiana. By contrast, early-heading varieties sometimes perform poorly in north Louisiana due to spring freeze damage. Vernalization and photoperiod response are the primary reasons for dividing Louisiana into North and South regions.

Early-heading and maturing varieties permit earlier harvest and timelier planting in a double-cropping system, while later-heading varieties guard against damage from a late spring freeze and can be planted earlier in north Louisiana. Early-heading varieties should be planted in the second half of the recommended planting window to avoid the likelihood of spring freeze damage. Lodging resistance helps guard against test weight decreases and yield loss that can result from near-mature heads laying on the ground from storms.

Disease resistance protects yield and reduced input costs. Varieties planted in the official variety trials are rated for naturally-occurring diseases. This information is provided in the 2016 Small Grain Performance Trials publication.

The 2015 and 2016 seasons were notable for moderate to severe Fusarium head blight (FHB), also known as scab, epidemics that occurred as a result of prolonged rainfall during flowering. There are no varieties fully resistant to FHB, but some varieties have a moderate level of resistance that helps reduce losses. It should be noted that varieties less susceptible to disease may not always produce the highest yields, especially if disease pressure is not present. However, in the presence of high disease pressure, the resistance preserves yield, as well as, enhances profitability by saving the costs of fungicide applications.

Triazole fungicides may suppress FHB. In earlier research tebuconazole (Folicur and generics) reduced incidence and severity of FHB. Prosaro (prothioconazole + tebuconazole), Proline (prothioconazole), and Caramba (metconazole) were somewhat efficacious on FHB in other studies. When applications are made under ideal conditions, one can expect a maximum of 50% control. On average, 40% control is more realistic.

Timing is critical. Essentially, we have a short window during flowering to make an effective application for FHB. The biggest problem is that ideal conditions (wet weather) for FHB infection are not ideal for making fungicide applications. Head coverage is critical. Sprayers should be calibrated to deliver maximum water volume (minimum 15 GPA by ground, 5 GPA by air) and optimal droplet size (300 to 350 microns). For ground sprayers, nozzles angled at 30° to the horizontal may maximize head coverage. Some research has shown that dual nozzles angled in opposite directions will also increase head coverage.

It is common to see 2-3 years of epidemics of FHB followed by years with little to no disease. If similar weather conditions are encountered next year during flowering, expect to encounter FHB again in 2017. An online (www.wheatscab.psu.edu) risk assessment tool based on temperature and relative humidity is available online, which has regional commentary that will help determine risk at a given location next year.

Crop management:

Planting dates for Louisiana wheat depend on location and variety. For southern and central Louisiana optimum planting dates range from November 1 through November 30. The optimum planting for northern Louisiana is slightly earlier, ranging from October 15 through November 15. Early-heading varieties should generally be planted after the mid-date, while late-heading varieties can be pushed a little on the early side of the planting window. The weather in north Louisiana is cooler in the fall and early winter, which slows growth and prevents excess winter growth. It is important that the wheat crop be well-established and fully tillered before going dormant in the coldest part of the winter. Additionally, because of the cooler conditions, the threat for fall pests (Hessian fly, armyworms and leaf rust) are decreased earlier in the fall compared to south and central Louisiana. While these dates are the optimum planting window averaged over years, the timing will vary in some years depending on weather patterns. Additionally, if wheat cannot be planted within these optimum windows, planting later than the optimum window is usually better than planting too early. Early planting can result in greater insect and fall rust establishment and also could predispose plants to spring freeze injury due to excessive fall growth and development. However, planting too late (more than 14 days after the optimum window) can result in significant yield loss due to slow emergence, seed rotting and decreased tillering period, which can result in fewer and smaller heads.

Wheat can be planted by broadcasting seed and incorporating; however, it is preferred that the seed be drilled. Drilling the seed increases the uniformity of depth and stand. Use recommended planting rates for drilled wheat (60 to 90 lb/A) or broadcast wheat (90-120 lb/A) of quality seed into a good seedbed with adequate moisture. This higher seeding rate should be adapted for conditions in which high germination or emergence is not expected, as with late-planted wheat or heavy, wet soils. Late-planted seed should be planted at a higher seeding rate using a drill to ensure rapid, adequate and uniform emergence.

Good surface drainage is critical to successful wheat production. Saturated fields lead to diseases such as root rots and downy mildew, reduce tillering and vegetative growth, and decrease root development and nutrient utilization. Yields in wheat fields suffering from waterlogging stress are greatly reduced. Fields with marginal drainage should be ditched to ensure water moves off the field as fast as possible, especially after heavy rainfall.

Nitrogen (N) fertilization of wheat can be a challenging aspect of production. Total N application should normally range from 90 to 120 pounds per acre, but this will vary depending on soil type and rainfall after applications. Timing of N application depends on several factors. The wheat crop needs adequate N in the fall and early winter to establish ground cover and properly tiller; however, excessive levels of fall N can result in rank growth and increased lodging potential, as well as increased susceptibility to spring freeze damage due to early heading. If the wheat crop is following soybean, soil residual or mineralizable N should be adequate for fall growth, and no pre-plant N is needed. However, if the wheat crop follows corn, sorghum, rice or cotton, the application of 15 to 20 pounds of N per acre would typically be beneficial. Where the wheat crop is planted later than optimum, additional N may be necessary to ensure adequate fall growth prior to winter conditions. If the wheat crop did not receive a fall application and appears to be suffering from N deficiency in January, the initial topdress N application can be made early to promote additional tillering. Early spring is when the majority of N for the wheat crop should be applied. There is no universal rule on how early spring N should be applied. Each field should be evaluated based on tillering, stage of development, environmental conditions and crop color. A crop that has good growth and good color should not need N fertilization prior to erect leaf sheath (Feekes 5), usually sometime in February. However, the first spring fertilizer application should be applied prior to first node (Feekes 6) to ensure optimum head development, tiller retention and head size. Crop N stress around jointing (Feekes 6) will result in yield losses. Any additional N applied following flag leaf typically contributes very little to crop yield. Splitting topdress N into two or three applications is common in Louisiana production systems due to the increased risk of N losses often associated with heavy rainfall and our long growing season. Splitting N typically occurs by applying fertilizer N at or just prior to jointing with a second application occurring 14 to 28 days later. About 50 percent of the topdress N is normally applied with the first split, but this may be decreased if the first split is put out early and plants are not able to take up that much N.

Phosphorus, potassium, and micronutrients should be applied in the fall based on soil test reports. All fertilizers applied as well as lime should be incorporated into the soil prior to planting. Required lime should be applied as soon as possible because it takes time for the lime to begin to neutralize the acidity of most soils. The application of sulfur (S) is a growing concern in Louisiana production systems, with increasing deficiencies appearing every year. Oftentimes, early spring sulfur deficiencies are mistaken for N deficiencies, and additional S is not applied. Because sulfur is mobile, similar to N, the application solely in the fall will not be adequate. Supplemental applications of S with spring N applications are often warranted.

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Cover Crops for Louisiana Agriculture

A cover crop is a crop planted primarily to manage soil erosion, increase soil fertility, reduce weeds, and improve water quality. Producers can actually receive assistance though both the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as well as Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP): Contact your local NRCS office for additional information.

Winter cover crops fall into two general categories – grass (grain) crops and legumes. The grass crops include wheat, rye and oats, while the legumes include such crops as the vetches, peas and clovers.

The winter grain crops can be grown for grain harvest or can be grown as green manure crops. The legumes will usually be grown as a green manure only. Green manure crops usually do not need fertilization and grow entirely on residual fertilizers. Winter grain crops require nitrogen fertilization but usually no other applied nutrients. Legumes do not require applied nitrogen but do require the appropriate nitrogen-fixing bacteria. Legumes have the ability to "fix" nitrogen from atmospheric nitrogen. Some of that "fixed" nitrogen will be available to provide low-cost nitrogen for the following summer crop – a very important feature that makes planting of legume cover crops practical and economical.

Other factors that are important in selection of cover crops are winter survival, biomass potential, maturity time, and nitrogen fixing potential. Specific characteristics of the available cover crops planted in Louisiana are extensive and information on the advantages and disadvantages of each are available from LSU AgCenter personnel in parish offices and research centers across Louisiana and from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

There are also summer cover crops, but are not planted in the southern United States in recent years because they are the principal income-producing crops for this region.

Summer cover crops may have a place in sugarcane production during the fallow period before planting a new plant-cane crop but, even here, a soybean grain crop is preferable to a cover crop. In fact, soybeans were once grown primarily as a summer cover crop in the southern United States, but soybeans' development as a cash crop during the 1950s illustrates the strong need and preference for a summer cash crop over a cover crop.

Other possible summer cover crops range from such crops as the familiar field peas or sorghum sudan grass to the more exotic such as sun hemp.

Planting Date

Critical to the success of winter cover crops is planting date. To achieve the plant growth desired for ground cover and nitrogen fixation, cover crops should be planted early enough to establish stands and attain some growth before low temperature limits plant development. Early establishment also is important so the cover crop can suppress winter weeds.

Clover crops can be planted as early as August. Most clovers also have reseeding capability and will re-establish year after year under appropriate conditions – under a cotton canopy, for example, but they can be killed by herbicide or defoliate applications.

For best results, winter peas and vetches should be planted by October 15. Later plantings through November will be successful but will not provide as much winter ground cover.

Growth Termination

Proper cover crop management is important to attain benefits without penalizing the productivity of the following cash crops. For maximum benefit, cover crops should have good biomass production before growth termination. The biomass produced protects the soil during the winter and provides the residue needed for ground cover during early summer. Legumes also must have attained a high rate of nitrogen fixation. Winter cover crops must be completely killed before planting a summer crop to prevent competition for soil water and to minimize insect damage to the summer crop. The cover crop should be dead for at least two weeks before planting the summer crop to avoid providing a "green bridge" that allows insects or pathogens to survive on the growing cover crop. Optimal termination timing also is important to minimize reproduction of plant-pathogenic nematodes on the roots of susceptible cover crops. Warming soils in the spring increases nematode growth and reproduction.

Optimal termination timing is therefore a balance between attainment of sufficient biomass and nitrogen fixation with the need for timely planting of the following summer crop. Because complete kill of winter cover crops is essential before planting the summer crop, all of the benefits of a winter cover crop will not be attained when the following summer crop is an early planted crop such as corn. Winter covers will not have accumulated maximum biomass or nitrogen when terminated in late February or early March, which somewhat limits the benefits of cover crops in corn production. Winter covers are better used in rotations with cotton, soybeans, grain sorghum or sweet potatoes - crops that can be planted after mid-April, which allows the winter cover to grow until early April, if necessary.

Biomass and nitrogen production from selected legume cover crops for four years and six locations throughout Louisiana.

Cover crop	Above-ground biomass average	Range in above-ground biomass production lowest	highest	Average nitrogen content
	---------- lb/acre ----------			
Hairy vetch	4347	2946	8699	144
Common vetch 'Cahaba white'	4054	0*	4592	122
Common vetch 'Au Early Cover'				
Bigflower vetch 'Woodford'	4157	2639	5925	97
Crimson clover 'Tibbee'	5827	4286	8254	147
Berseem clover 'Bigbee'	5489	2843	9498	137
Arrowleaf clover 'Amclo'	2480			135
Sub clover 'Mt. Barker'	4290	2733	5567	122
Red clover 'Cherokee'	3519	0*	5584	116
Austrian winter pea	3866	1904	7088	88
Rough (Caly) pea	3968	2704	7666	135
Wheat	4835	2103	6738	54
Ryegrass	3856	851	7285	46

*Winter killed in some years at some locations.

Data adapted from Dabney et al. Louisiana Agriculture 33:8-9.

Nutrient Cycling

Both grass and legume cover crops will use the residual plant nutrients applied to the previous crops. This sequestering of nutrients prevents their loss during the winter and early spring when rainfall in Louisiana is highest and nutrient loss through leaching and runoff is most likely to occur. Cover crops will assimilate and sequester up to 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre and significant quantities of other major and minor nutrients, as well. The sequestered nutrients in winter legume cover crops are mineralized quickly and will be available for use by the following summer crop. Grass cover crops, however, release the sequestered nutrients slowly in a process that may take 3 years. Until equilibrium is attained, additional fertilizer application may be needed to replace the nutrients held in grass residues.

Soil Cover

The amount of soil cover provided by cover crops and their residues varies with location, growing conditions, soil type, and termination time. Variation among locations and years due to differences in growing conditions is greater than the variation among cover crop species. Still, some species of cover crops are more likely than others to produce adequate ground cover.

The most consistent biomass producers for rotations in Louisiana are winter grains, hairy vetch and various types of winter peas. With warm winters and adequate water, cover crops can sometimes produce excessive biomass, in which case growth should be terminated at an earlier date to prevent problems with planting summer crops. The residue from cover crops should not be burned (which would destroy large amounts of plant nutrients) and should always be left on the soil surface to attain the conservation benefits.

Nitrogen Fixation

As with biomass production, cover crops vary in the amount of nitrogen fixation. Hairy vetch and winter peas are some of the best winter legumes for Louisiana and will contain as much as 150 pounds of available nitrogen in the aboveground biomass, although 100 to 120 pounds is more typical. Usually, about 70 percent of the nitrogen content of legume biomass is from nitrogen fixation, and the remaining 30 percent is from scavenging residual nitrogen sources.

Significant amounts of nitrogen are not fixed and stored in plant biomass until the plants enter reproductive growth phases. Winter peas are faster to establish and have faster early growth than vetch, providing more ground cover and nitrogen during fall and winter months. Clovers can produce higher levels of biomass and nitrogen fixation but only if planted very early. Otherwise, growth and especially nitrogen fixation occur too late in the spring for maximum benefit. Some clovers produce plenty of biomass and fixed nitrogen, but clovers are more difficult to manage than peas and vetches and have shown allelopathic effects on summer crops in Louisiana research.

Tillage Radish

Over the past several years, there has been a great interest in tillage radish as a cover crop in Louisiana. Research in other states has shown because of their deep root system, rapid root extension, and heavy N feeding, radishes are excellent scavengers of residual N following summer crops. Unlike small grains whose residues decompose slowly and continue to immobilize nitrogen for an extended period, radish residues decompose and release nitrogen rapidly. Other states have also shown that a good stand of radishes can reduce winter weeds. It is important to keep in mind that even though tillage radish produce a lot of biomass, they are highly decomposable and increases in soil organic matter is unlikely. Research by the LSU AgCenter continues to look at tillage radish as a cover crop and to develop an effective termination program that will allow planting following tillage radish as a cover crop.

Below are other links that have good cover crop information:

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as well as Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP):

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/la/programs/financial/eqip/

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/la/programs/financial/csp/

Planting Rates for Louisiana by MLRA:

http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/LA/PLANTMATERIALSTECHNICALNOTENO1.pdf

Statewide cost list for FY 2016. When Available:

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/la/programs/financial/eqip/

Conservation Update publication articles:

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=nrcseprd395809&ext=pdf

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=stelprdb1258847&ext=pdf

NRCS Louisiana Cover Crop Standard:

http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/LA/340CoverCropStandard.pdf

NRCS Louisiana Cover Crop Specifications:

http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/LA/CoverCropSpecifications_022315.pdf

The next two pages are an example of the information in the above link.

Chart 2 **PERFORMANCE AND ROLES**

	Species	Legume N Source	Total N (lb./A)[1]	Dry Matter (lb./A/yr.)	N Scavenger[2]	Soil Builder[3]	Erosion Fighter[4]	Weed Fighter	Good Grazing[5]	Quick Growth
NONLEGUMES	Annual ryegrass *p. 74*			2,000–9,000	◕	◕	◕	◕	◕	◕
	Barley *p. 77*			2,000–10,000	◕	◕	●	◕	◕	◕
	Oats *p. 93*			2,000–10,000	◕	◑	◕	●	◑	●
	Rye *p. 98*			3,000–10,000	●	●	●	●	◑	●
	Wheat *p. 111*			3,000–8,000	◕	◕	◕	◕	◕	◕
	Buckwheat *p. 90*			2,000–4,000	○	◑	◔	●	○	●
	Sorghum-sudan. *p. 106*			8,000–10,000	●	●	●	◕	◕	●
BRASSICAS	Mustards *p.81*		30–120	3,000–9,000	◑	◕	◕	◕	◑	◕
	Radish *p. 81*		50–200	4,000–7,000	●	◕	◕	●	◑	◕
	Rapeseed *p. 81*		40–160	2,000–5,000	◕	◑	◕	◕	◑	◕
LEGUMES	Berseem clover *p. 118*	●	75–220	6,000–10,000	◕	◕	◕	●	●	●
	Cowpeas *p. 125*	●	100–150	2,500–4,500	◔	◑	●	●	◑	◕
	Crimson clover *p. 130*	◕	70–130	3,500–5,500	◑	◕	◕	◕	●	◑
	Field peas *p. 135*	●	90–150	4,000–5,000	◔	◑	◕	◑	◕	◕
	Hairy vetch *p. 142*	●	90–200	2,300–5,000	◔	◕	◑	◑	◑	◔
	Medics *p. 152*	◑	50–120	1,500–4,000	◔	◑	◑	◕	◕	●
	Red clover *p. 159*	◕	70–150	2,000–5,000	◑	◕	◑	◕	●	◔
	Subterranean clovers *p. 164*	●	75–200	3,000–8,500	◔	◕	◕	●	◕	◑
	Sweetclovers *p. 171*	●	90–170	3,000–5,000	◔	●	◕	◕	◕	◑
	White clover *p. 179*	●	80–200	2,000–6,000	◔	◑	◕	◕	●	◔
	Woollypod vetch *p. 185*	●	100–250	4,000–8,000	◑	●	◑	●	◑	◕

[1]**Total N**—Total N from all plant. Grasses not considered N source. [2]**N Scavenger**—Ability to take up/store excess nitrogen.
[3]**Soil Builder**—Organic matter yield and soil structure improvement. [4]**Erosion Fighter**—Soil-holding ability of roots and total plant.
[5]**Good Grazing**—Production, nutritional quality and palatability. Feeding pure legumes can cause bloat.

○=Poor; ◔=Fair; ◑=Good; ◕=Very Good; ●=Excellent

Chart 2 **PERFORMANCE AND ROLES** continued

	Species	Lasting Residue[1]	Duration[2]	Harvest Value[3] F*	Harvest Value[3] S*	Cash Crop Interseed[4]	Comments
NONLEGUMES	Annual ryegrass	◕	◕	◑	◔	●	Heavy N and H_2O user; cutting boosts dry matter significantly.
	Barley	●	◑	◕	◑	◕	Tolerates moderately alkaline conditions but does poorly in acid soil < pH 6.0.
	Oats	◑	◔	◑	◑	●	Prone to lodging in N-rich soil.
	Rye	●	◕	◔	◔	◕	Tolerates triazine herbicides.
	Wheat	◕	◕	◑	◕	◔	Heavy N and H_2O user in spring.
	Buckwheat	○	◔	○	◔	◕	Summer smother crop; breaks down quickly.
	Sorghum-sudangrass	◕	●	●	○	○	Mid-season cutting increases yield & root penetration.
BRASSICAS	Mustards	◔	◑	○	◔	○	Suppresses nematodes and weeds.
	Radish	◔	◑	◕	◔	◔	Good N scavenging and weed control; N released rapidly.
	Rapeseed	◑	◕	◔	●	○	Suppresses *Rhizoctonia.*
LEGUMES	Berseem clover	◑	●	●	◕	◑	Very flexible cover crop, green manure, forage.
	Cowpeas	◔	●	◑	◑	◑	Season length, habit vary by cultivar.
	Crimson clover	◑	◔	●	◕	●	Established easily, grows quickly if planted early in fall; matures early in spring.
	Field peas	◔	◑	●	◕	●	Biomass breaks down quickly.
	Hairy vetch	◔	◕	◔	◕	◑	Bi-culture with small grain expands seasonal adaptability.
	Medics	◑	◕	◑	◑	◑	Use annual medics for interseeding.
	Red clover	◔	◑	●	◕	●	Excellent forage, easily established; widely adapted.
	Subterranean clover	◕	◕	◕	○	●	Strong seedlings, quick to nodulate.
	Sweetclovers	◕	◕	◕	◑	◑	Tall stalks, deep roots in second year.
	White clover	◔	●	◕	◑	◕	Persistent after first year.
	Woollypod vetch	◔	◕	◔	◕	◑	Reseeds poorly if mowed within 2 months of seeddrop; overgrazing can be toxic.

[1]**Lasting Residue**—Rates how long the killed residue remains on the surface. [2]**Duration**—Length of vegetative stage.
[3]**Harvest Value**—Economic value as a forage (F) or as seed (S) or grain. [4]**Cash Crop Interseed**—Rates how well the cover crop will perform with an appropriate companion crop.

○=Poor; ◔=Fair; ◑=Good; ◕=Very Good; ●=Excellent

Soybean Seed Damage

Sebe Brown and David Kerns: LSU AgCenter Entomologists

Louisiana farmers will often harvest soybeans with a high percentage of damaged seed resulting in significant marketing discounts and reduced yield. Louisiana's climatic conditions encourage high levels of insect infestations and disease presence in soybean fields. Add to this, the unpredictable nature of the weather and you have optimum conditions for seed and pod deterioration.

Seed quality is at its highest as soon as crop development is completed and before any weather-related events cause seed degradation. Seed quality is a function of initial quality at maturity, which is the cumulative effect of a variety's exposure to season long growing conditions including insects and disease and the varieties' genetics. It's also a function of harvest quality which includes effects of field weathering after maturity.

Quality differences initially originate from the producer's management practices, maturity date and the varieties ability to protect from opportunistic diseases and fungi. Some varieties have physical and chemical attributes that allow their pod wall to maintain integrity longer than other varieties, thus protecting seeds from the effects of weathering and possibly insects and disease. However, with enough time and moisture, all pods will deteriorate.

Not all seed injury is weather related and not all seed injury is insect or disease related. Many soybean plants will have multiple combinations of injury usually not caused by only one agent. Furthermore, injury to soybean seed can be very difficult to classify. Stink bug injury can be misidentified as weathering and vice versa. Below are some images to help identify soybean seed injury (all images courtesy MSU).

Purple mottled and Stained (fungus)

Shriveled or wrinkled damage

Heat damage (Materially Damaged/Heating)

Soybeans have a remarkable ability to tolerate high levels of stress throughout the growing season and still produce a marketable, high yielding crop. In 2016, producer's faced a very wet spring followed by a very dry June and July, compounded by torrential rain fall in August. Aside from environmental factors, insect pressure was extremely high with an 8 week long corn earworm flight, followed by unrelenting redbanded stink bug pressure and a substantial soybean looper and green cloverworm infestation. All of these issues, over time, will have an impact on final yield and quality. Louisiana experiences the brunt of environmental stress, late season, when soybean stems fail to dry down and develop green stem syndrome. Although the exact cause is unknown, soybean stems that fail to dry down typically have experienced some form of stress during the season.

Finally, with the 2016 growing season being marked with so many production challenges, it is very difficult to pin an exact cause of seed and plant injury on one factor. Louisiana's dynamic climate and diverse insect and disease spectrum makes producing soybeans or any agronomic crop a difficult endeavor.

LSU AgCenter Launches Crop Specific Text Message Groups

In an effort to better reach crop specific clientele, the LSU AgCenter has formed several crop specific text message groups. The intent of the text message groups is to provide timely information to growers, crop consultants, land owners, extension, research, and other related industry personnel. Text messages will be sent out as reminders for meetings, updates about product registrations, notifications of new publications and newsletters, updates of disease and pest outbreaks (somewhat as an early warning system), as well as other important information as it arises during the growing season.

It was pointed out that it would be important that text messages go out from the AgCenter and that recipient would not have the capability to text back to the whole group because this could cause endless text messages going back and forth. Another key was that all personal information should be kept private. The program that we have decided to manage the text message groups with is called Remind. This program is often used by school teachers to text-message students and parents and does not allow texts to be sent back to the group. All phone numbers from the different members of the group is kept confidential and is not shared with others within the group.

A Remind computer and smart phone application is also available if you would like to download it. The app allows you to receive the texts in the app in addition to the regular text message feature. This is convenient, especially if you do not have text message capabilities. *In addition, if you opt in for the feature, you can instant message/chat with others in the group within the app. Again, all phone numbers and other information is kept confidential. Only your name is visible.*

If you would like to join the one of the commodity text groups, simply send a text message to **81010** with the name of **one** of the groups in the body of the message:

@larice @lasoybean @lacorn @lacotton @lasorghum @lawheat @lacropcon @laspotato @lasugar

Repeat process to join more than one text group

To unsubscribe to any group, simply text back "unsubscribe**@larice**" (or other group name) to the group. If you would like to get the text messages by email, send an email to **larice@mail.remind.com** (or other group name). If you would like to unsubscribe to the email messages, simply email back with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Commodity	Group text number	Group Text Name
Rice	81010	@larice
Corn	81010	@lacorn
Grain Sorghum	81010	@lasorghum
Soybeans	81010	@lasoybean
Wheat	81010	@lawheat
Louisiana Crop Consultants	81010	@lacropcon
Sweet Potato	81010	@laspotato
Sugarcane	81010	@lasugar

Upcoming Calendar of Events

Harvest

Parish Contact Information

Parish	County Agent	Phone	Email
Acadia	Jeromy Herbert	337-788-8821	jherbert@agcenter.lsu.edu
Allen	Keith Fontenot	337-639-4376	kfontenot@agcenter.lsu.edu
Ascension	Al Orgeron	225-562-2320	aorgeron@agcenter.lsu.edu
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