Last Issue in 2006

Over the past several years, I have written many articles for each year’s final Bulletin issue. These articles have contained lots of suggestions, lots of thanks, and lots of commentary about the growing season just past and the one to come. However, we all know by now that the next growing season likely will be dissimilar to the one just past, and in turn unlike the one after. That’s part of what agriculture is all about and part of what makes agriculture an exciting area in which to work. So I’ll leave it at that.

For this last issue in 2006, I’ll keep it short and sweet. We Extension specialists and educators who write articles for the Bulletin thank all of you subscribers and occasional readers for your continued support over the years. Without your support and interest, we could not sustain the effort. We sincerely appreciate your input, feedback, and reports, and we hope the information written is timely and useful. If it isn’t, let us know. And let us know how we can improve, too.

I hope you had a productive and memorable 2006 and that you are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities to be presented in 2007. I look forward to visiting with many of you during the winter meeting season, and I wish you all happy holidays with family and friends.—Kevin Steffey

Registration for the 2007 Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference and the University of Illinois Corn & Soybean Classics Now Open

Online registration is up and running for the University of Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference and Corn & Soybean Classics. You can register for either program by visiting the conference pages on our IPM Web site (www.ipm.uiuc.edu/conferences). After you select the program of interest, you can learn more about it on the pages that have been developed specifically for the conference or the Classics. A “Registration” tab is available for each program, and the registration process is simple.

Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference. You can view a PDF copy of the program for the 2007 Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference by clicking on the “Program” tab. More information about the program is available if you click on the “Session Schedule” tab. Each presentation should include a link to an abstract of the presentation and a photograph of the speaker. In addition, links to maps of the Illini Union will help you locate the rooms in which all of the sessions will be held.

We will offer no keynote address in the opening session of the conference in 2007. Instead, after a brief welcome, we will get into a discussion about things that happened during the 2006 season and forecasts for 2007. Speakers will give brief overviews of the 2006 growing season regarding weather (Angel), crop production (Nafziger), weeds (Hager), soybean rust and other corn and soybean diseases (Bissonnette), nematodes (Niblack), and insects (Steffey). Ample time for questions and answers will encourage interaction between speakers and audience. The session will be moderated by Todd Gleason, media/communication specialist with Information Technology and Communications Services in the College of ACES.
Concurrent issues-based symposia make up the conference during the afternoon of January 3 and the morning of January 4. Titles for the six symposia were provided in issue no. 24 (November 3, 2006) of the Bulletin. We will close the conference with a frank discussion about strengthening the partnership between the University of Illinois and the Illinois agribusiness community. Jean Payne, president of the Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association, and Bob Hoeft, head of the Department of Crop Sciences, will share some thoughts and ideas, but we really want to hear your feedback and consider your input. We invite everyone to attend this session before departing by 1:15 p.m.

Corn & Soybean Classics. The schedule and program for the six Corn & Soybean Classics can be viewed at www.ipm.uiuc.edu/conferences/csc/index.html. Meeting dates and locations are listed, and the registration page is live. I invite you to join us as we present the Classics for the 10th year in 2007.

We hope you are able to attend either the Illinois Crop Protection Technology Conference or the Corn & Soybean Classics, or both. Please help us spread the word about both programs. We’ll see you in 2007.—Kevin Steffey

Some Distance Education Events Are Scheduled for 2007

Three distinctly different workshops or short courses will be delivered by extension and research personnel in February and March 2007. Specialists will present from multiple locations to (depending on the program) multiple sites in Illinois, selected states, or all north-central states. Following is information about each of these educational events, with more specific information to come in “Alert” articles in the Bulletin online and in other promotional materials. Mark these on your calendars; you won’t want to miss them.

Alfalfa Workshop, February 26, 2007. This workshop, intended for Illinois clientele, will include a variety of topics—keys to successful alfalfa establishment, insect concerns in 2007, natural enemies and insect pests of alfalfa, pricing alfalfa for sale, and Roundup Ready alfalfa. Presenters will be extension specialists and educators from the University of Illinois, Iowa State University, and the University of Wisconsin. For more information, contact Jim Morrison, Extension educator in crop systems, Rockford Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension (815-397-7714, morrison@uiuc.edu).

Western Bean Cutworm Short Course, February 28, 2007. This short course, intended for clientele in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, will focus on the western bean cutworm, an insect pest whose range has expanded very rapidly from western Iowa to eastern Ohio (2000 to 2006). Extension entomologists from the University of Illinois, Iowa State University, and the University of Wisconsin will present the program. Topics to be addressed:

- Review of the situation
- History and biology of the western bean cutworm
- Look-alikes—moths and larvae
- Pest status and economic impact
- Making control decisions (trapping, using temperature data, field scouting)
- Control options

Registration for this short course is not yet open, but look for it soon. For more information, contact David Feltes, Extension educator in IPM, Quad Cities Extension Center, University of Illinois Extension (309-792-2500, dfeltes@uiuc.edu).

Managing Soybean Aphids in 2007—How Will Biological Control Contribute? March 6, 2007. Entomologists from throughout the Midwest will present a short course focused on managing soybean aphids in 2007, with emphasis on biological control, including conservation of natural enemies. Experts from several states will deliver the course by distance education technology to sites in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Receiving sites in all states will advertise the course locally.

General content will include history and biology of the soybean aphid, review of the soybean aphid situation, biological control of soybean aphids (What is it? What do we have to work with in the United States?), introducing new natural enemies into the United States, and preparing for soybean aphids in 2007 (management guidelines, and the potential for biological control: What is it we don’t know that will help us in the future?)

Registration for this short course is open at the North Central IPM Web site (www.ncipmc.org/teleconference). A one-page promotional piece has been created and posted to the registration site and to the Soybean Aphid Biological Control Web site (www.entomology.wisc.edu/sabc, under “What’s New in Soybean Aphid Biocontrol?”). For more details about the course, contact Kevin Steffey, Extension specialist in entomology, Department of Crop Sciences, University of Illinois (217-244-2128, ksteffey@uiuc.edu).

We hope you can participate in one or more of these distance education events.—Kevin Steffey

2007 University of Illinois Regional Crop Management Conferences

As part of the portfolio of University of Illinois Extension field crop production and protection programs, three regional crop management conferences will be held in late January through mid-February. We view these programs as complementary to the Crop Protection Technology Conference on January 3 and 4 (www.ipm.uiuc.edu/conferences/cptc/index.html) and to the Corn & Soybean Classics held
at six locations in January (www.ipm.uiuc.edu/conferences/csc/index.html). The Crop Management Conferences, developed by University of Illinois Extension educators and specialists, provide a great opportunity to interact with instructors on a broad range of topics likely to affect producers’ bottom lines in 2007.

Certified crop advisers can earn up to 13 hours of continuing education units. Each conference will focus on those regional issues most likely to be of greatest interest and importance to the audience and includes concurrent sessions as well as opening and closing general sessions. Participants will be able to attend 6 of the 24 concurrent topic sessions offered. Because of the high demand for Soil & Water CEU credits, topics in this area will be covered during the general sessions so that everyone can participate.

The workshops will be conducted on the following dates:

- January 30–31: Southern Illinois Crop Management Conference, Rend Lake Resort and Conference Center, Whittington, Illinois. For more information, contact Dennis Epplin, Mt. Vernon Extension Center (618-242-9310; depplin@uiuc.edu).

- February 13–14: Central Illinois Crop Management Conference, Route 66 Hotel and Conference Center, Springfield, Illinois. For more information, contact Robert Bellm, Edwardsville Extension Center (618-692-9434; rcbellm@uiuc.edu).

- February 20–21: Northern Illinois Crop Management Conference, Kishwaukee College Convention Center, Malta, Illinois. For more information, contact Greg Clark, Whiteside Extension Unit (815-772-4075; gmclark@uiuc.edu).

Advance registration, no later than one week prior to each conference, is $100 per person. Late and on-site registration is $125. The fee includes lunch, refreshments, and handouts for both days. There is no one-day registration option. These regional conferences provide a great way to continue with your preparations for the 2007 growing season.—Mike Gray and Kevin Steffey

### INSECTS

**Results (as PowerPoint Slides) from the 2006 Fall Survey for Second-Generation European Corn Borers**

In issue no. 24 (November 3, 2006) of the **Bulletin**, we published the results from the 2006 fall survey for second-generation European corn borers and provided some interpretation of the data. Since then, we have developed a slide set encompassing all of the data gathered in all crop reporting districts and counties. The data included are average densities of European corn borer larvae and average percentages of infestation. To access the slides, go to www.ipm.uiuc.edu/fieldcrops/insects/european_corn_borer/index.html, then click on “Fall Survey 2006.” If you use any of the data, please acknowledge the Department of Crop Sciences, University of Illinois. And don’t hesitate to contact either me or Mike Gray if you have any questions about the data.—Kevin Steffey

### REGIONAL REPORTS

Extension center educators, unit educators, and unit assistants in northern, west-central, east-central, and southern Illinois prepare regional reports to provide more localized insight into pest situations and crop conditions in Illinois. The reports will keep you up to date on situations in field and forage crops as they develop throughout the season. The regions have been defined broadly to include the agricultural statistics districts as designated by the Illinois Agricultural Statistics Service, with slight modifications:

- North (Northwest and Northeast districts, plus Stark and Marshall counties)
- West-central (West and West Southwest districts, and Peoria, Woodford, Tazewell, Mason, Menard, and Logan counties from the Central district)
- East-central (East and East Southeast districts [except Marion, Clay, Richland, and Lawrence counties], McLean, DeWitt, and Macon counties from the Central district)
- South (Southwest and Southeast districts, and Marion, Clay, Richland, and Lawrence counties from the East Southeast district)

We hope these reports will provide additional benefits for staying current as the season progresses.

### Northern Illinois

Corn harvest is complete for all practical purposes, with only a few scattered fields remaining to be harvested. However, last week’s snowfall throughout most of the region has halted all field activity. A large portion of the region received at least 10 inches of snow, with some areas reporting 18 inches. Some producers had not finished anhydrous ammonia application and fall tillage activities.

Corn harvest continues in most areas, with the southern third of the northern region about 90% or more complete, and the remainder of the region varying from 60% to 80% complete. A large majority of cornfields have yielded from 180 to 200-plus bushels per acre. Disease resistance and stalk strength are certainly variable among the hybrids this year. Stalk rot problem fields are still evident and are slowing down harvest completion.

Soybean harvest is over 95% complete, with most fields yielding between 45 and 60 bushels per acre. Disease resistance and stalk strength are certainly variable among the hybrids this year. Stalk rot problem fields are still evident and are slowing down harvest completion.

Soybean harvest is over 95% complete, with most fields yielding between 45 and 60 bushels per acre. Disease resistance and stalk strength are certainly variable among the hybrids this year. Stalk rot problem fields are still evident and are slowing down harvest completion.

The majority of the seeded wheat has emerged, and 2007 wheat acreage may be higher than 2006’s.

### Southern Illinois

The major issue in the southern region is directly related to the heavy rains
and ice storm on November 30. Wheat fields throughout the area are saturated, and fields with poor surface drainage have ponded areas. In the western portion of the region, up to 2 inches of ice and sleet accumulated on fields, and unless this melts rather quickly, stand damage is likely.

**West-Central Illinois**

Harvest is complete, and 80% to 90% of the fall tillage is done. Also, close to 90% of the anhydrous has been applied. There will definitely be an increase in corn acres, judging by the amount of anhydrous being applied and tillage to cornstalks. Wheat acres will also be up this year. The wheat is looking much better with the warmer temps that we experienced the last few weeks. More tillage and fertilizer will continue if weather permits. Prices continue to climb, and farmers are in very good moods.

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