

Blacklands IPM Newsletter

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Status

Corn planting continues across the Blacklands. Many wheat fields are at first node and are growing rapidly. Several producers sprayed for leaf rust in order to protect the plants through flag leaf emergence.

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Weather

Fields dried out this week to allow corn planting to continue, and it will continue to be warm the next few days. Friday and Saturday bring a high chance of thunderstorms, with over a half inch of rain forecasted over both days combined. According to the Texas A&M state climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon, last month was the warmest February in 100 years. This winter may be on its way to earning the warmest on record as well. Flowers and fruit trees are blooming early, and crops across the US are growing at an increased pace.

News and Articles

Almost 500,000 acres of crop and pastureland has been decimated by wildfires in the last few days in the Texas panhandle, with both human and livestock losses. If you are interested in donating to support the relief effort, please contact your local extension office (Hill AgriLife is accepting giftcards to mail) or the agents in Lipscomb and Gray Counties. Contact numbers and other information are provided in this [article](#).

The public comment period for the registration of pyrethroids has been extended to March 31st. Follow this [link](#) for guidance on writing a support letter.

TopGuard Terra (flutriafol) has recently undergone [label changes](#), with the addition of options to apply before or after planting.

Wheat

Warm temperatures and periodic rain have created ideal conditions for the spread of leaf rust this spring. Many producers applied a fungicide at topdress and are applying again just before flag leaves emerge.

Most fields, regardless of variety, are showing flecking of the upper leaves. Flecking indicates a resistance response from the plant: as spores land on the leaf surface, the plant kills the cells surrounding it, preventing the fungus from growing and spreading. Leaf flecking can be seen by holding a leaf up to a light source (pictured right). "Flecks" are the lighter dots in the leaf where the cells are dead. Some varieties are prone to flecking even without the presence of disease.



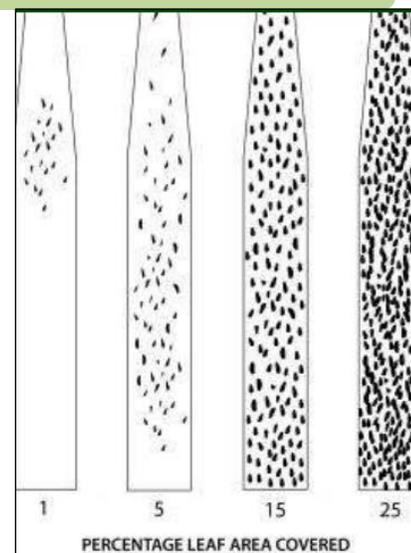
Wheat

Protecting the flag leaf from rust is critical. For leaf rust, if the flag leaf is 10% covered in pustules you can expect about a 10% yield loss. The illustration (right) shows what percent leaf coverage may look like on a leaf. The fungus pustules kill plant cells and reduce the photosynthetic abilities of the leaf, which leads to yield loss.

When spraying a fungicide, coverage is extremely important. Consider using fungicides with residual action (14-21 days) to get the most out of your fungicide and protect the flag leaf for as long as possible. Here is a [list of suitable fungicides](#), but be sure to double check on availability as this list was generated in 2016.

Wheat at the milk stage is much less susceptible to yield loss from leaf rust: it takes 40% leaf coverage of the flag leaf to result in 8% yield losses.

Dr. Ron French, extension plant pathologist, has this guide available for making [decisions to spray for stripe rust](#).



The following chart shows potential yield loss from leaf rust based on percent flag leaf coverage and stage of the crop.

% Yield Loss from Leaf Rust

% Leaf Rust on Flag leaf	10	25	40	65	100
Flowering	10	15	20	30	35
Milk	2	5	8	14	20
Soft Dough	1	3	4	7	10
Hard Dough	1	1	1	3	5



This chart shows potential yield loss from stripe rust based on the susceptibility of the wheat variety and when the infection first came to the field.

% Yield Loss from Stripe Rust (from start of infection)

Host Susceptibility Rating	S	MS	MR	R
1 st Node (F6)	85	75	55	25
Flag Leaf (F9)	75	45	15	5
Mid-Boot (F10)	65	25	7	2
F10-10.1	50	10	3	1
Mid-Heading (F10.3)	40	5	2	0
Mid-Flowering (F10.52)	12	2	1	0



Aphid populations are down around the county due to the abundance of predators and parasitoids. No other insects or diseases of concern have been seen or reported.