

Soybean aphids have been found around the county at low population numbers. Now is a good time to be scouting your soybean fields to make sure there are not hot spots in your fields. **The economic threshold is an average of 250 soybean aphids per plant, 80% incidence of an aphid on plants and increasing populations.** Remember soybean aphid infestations are spotty and populations can vary field to field, so scout each individual field. Avoid counting the white-casted skins of aphid nymphs; they are not live aphids. Janet Knodel, NDSU Extension Entomologist, has also reported observing an increase in beneficial 'good' insects in many fields. Waiting until the economic threshold will help conserve these good insects and mitigate insecticide treatments. Be vigilant scouting for aphid population resurgence later in the season through the R6.5 (full seed) crop stage, since winged soybean aphids will move around field to field and start new infestations.

Another good reason to wait to treat until the economic threshold level is outbreaks of secondary pests that are triggered by early insecticide application for soybean aphids. For example, spraying pyrethroid insecticides for soybean aphids can cause two-spotted spider mites to flare up. With the current dry conditions, it is wise to look for spider mites when scouting for soybean aphids.

Early detection of spider mites and leaf injury symptoms (stippling and leaf discoloration) is important to prevent crop damage from spider mites and to facilitate rescue treatments. To scout for spider mites, place a piece of white paper under a soybean leaf, shake the leaf over the piece of white paper, and then observe the white piece of paper for spider mites. Be sure to scout for pests during full pod (R4) through beginning seed (R5) stages since these crop stages are the most important contributors to soybean yield.

Consult the ND Field Crop Insect Management Guide 2014, E-1143, NDSU Extension Service, for a list of insecticides registered for soybean aphid and spider mite control. For more information, contact the Steele County Extension office by phone 701-524-2253, e-mail alicia.harstad@ndsu.edu, or Facebook at www.facebook.com/steelecountyextension. NDSU is an equal opportunity institution.