

# THE FORAGER

*Agronomics with livestock in mind!*

## High grasshopper populations require precautions for fall and winter crops ~

Recent weather (early September) has favored grasshopper development and based on an August 2011 adult grasshopper survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), grasshopper populations remain high in many states. If warm weather continues, conditions will favor egg-laying behavior by female grasshoppers and the hazard may remain high in 2012. Winter wheat may be at risk of attack even yet this fall season, along with other grasses and grains.

Planting seed products such as winter wheat later in the season is one strategy to mitigate potential damage caused by grasshoppers. Adult grasshoppers will remain active during the fall season as long as daytime temperatures remain warm. Later planting dates reduce the window of time that a crop is exposed to grasshopper activity. Later planting also reduces the risk of damage by aphids and the wheat curl mite, both of which can vector serious diseases.

Vigilant scouting is recommended! Adult grasshoppers can fly and are very mobile, so localized densities can change quickly. The migratory and two-striped grasshoppers are prevalent species in the current outbreak. Damage thresholds for emerging winter wheat or related forages is 3-7 per square yard within the field, or 11-20 per square yard around the field margin.

Typically, grasshoppers move into crops from surrounding grassland. In some cases, weeds may attract grasshoppers into fallow fields. Treatment strategies are based on protecting crop edges from invading grasshoppers. Border treatments applied as insecticidal sprays or seed treatments are the main recommendation for protecting emerging forage and grain seedlings.

Typically, spraying insecticide 150 feet beyond the edge of the crop is a sufficient border. If grasshopper populations are very high, they are difficult to control, and continued scouting is required since they can reinvade the protected border. At very high densities, borders up to 0.25 mile beyond the crop and repeated applications may need to be considered. One or two passes with an appropriate insecticide (such as those containing active ingredients imidacloprid and thiamethoxam) around the perimeter of the field may also be effective. Adult grasshoppers are more difficult to control, and the higher end of the label rate is recommended. *(Continued in next column)*

*(Continued from previous column)*

When applying border sprays, timing is important. Border sprays beyond the edge of the crop need to be applied just before the seed emerges; if it is applied too early there may not be enough residual and if it is applied too late, the damage may have already occurred. Systemic seed treatments eliminate the timing concern. Systemic insecticides require feeding to be active, but crop damage should be slowed considerably.

*(Edited from an article by Evelyn Boswell, MT State U Sept. 2011)*



## SEED – AGRONOMY – NUTRONOMY

Contact our Agronomy Office for Information & Support

**1.800.346.3649**

## SELLING SEED FOR 2012:

Be sure to check out your **2012 SEED GUIDE**, which was distributed following our PLOT/NUTRONOMY™ DAY in early September! This has a lot of helpful information for the coming seed year.

It's time to promote and sell seed for the 2012 planting season! There may be some concern as to availability and shortages with regard to some corn hybrids for the coming seed season, with a potential impact on other forage crops. That's why it is important for you to work with your producer-customers and prospects, trying to lock-in the seed hybrids/products they want. The sooner this is done... the better their potential of getting what they want. Also, with early orders and related payments, they can optimize their investment with applicable discounts. Don't wait to get the order – and whatever discounts are available can always be applied. Get the facts and promote seed sales for 2012. The next growing season starts now!