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## Watch Out for These Soybean Pests in 2012

**HARRISBURG, PA (June 25, 2012)** -- Penn State entomologist Dr. John Tooker encourages Pennsylvania's soybean growers to be aware of the potential insect problems which may appear in this year's crop. Penn State Extension will track populations in a sentinel plot project funded by the Pennsylvania Soybean Board, and provide updates via Penn State's weekly [Field Crop News](#).

"To understand the risk from insects to this year's soybeans, it is often best to review what we saw last season and then project ahead," says Tooker. Of all the reported insect problems in Pennsylvania soybean fields in 2011, Tooker says the most consistent were bean leaf beetle, grasshoppers, and two-spotted spider mites.

### **Bean leaf beetle**

Bean leaf beetle is a native insect that has two generations per year. It spends the winter as an adult in leaf litter in wooded areas where its populations can be knocked back with a really cold winter.

"Obviously, Pennsylvania experienced a mild winter so we can expect the larger than average bean leaf populations from 2011 to remain or even grow in 2012," says Tooker. "This pest species tends to attack the earliest emerging soybean fields and then can be problematic later in the season feeding on developing pods, and to a lesser degree defoliating soybean plants."

### **Grasshoppers & spider mites**

The two other notable pest species attacking soybeans last year were grasshoppers and two-spotted spider mites. "Both of these species thrive in the hot dry conditions that blanketed Pennsylvania in July of 2011, as well as parts of the summer of 2010," says Tooker. "As a result, these populations appear to have grown over the past few years and if we get hot dry conditions in 2012, growers need to keep an eye out for these pests."

### **Slugs & stink bugs**

Tooker says the other two pest species to watch out for are slugs and brown marmorated stink bugs.

"Due to the wet fall of 2011 and mild winter of 2011-2012, slug populations around the state appear quite healthy. The moist conditions we saw in many parts of Pennsylvania at or after planting this spring, caused many no-till growers to see plenty of slug damage, causing some growers to replant. Slugs are best managed with an integrated approach that combines all available tactics. "

Tooker suggests referencing Penn State's recently updated fact sheet (<http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/slugs-as-pests-of-field-crops>) for information on slug management. Much of the information on this fact sheet is a result of research that was funded by the Pennsylvania Soybean Board through the soybean checkoff.

"Many will recall the summer of 2010 when brown marmorated stink bugs really exploded and populations accumulated in peoples' homes, orchards, vegetable gardens, and soybean fields, particularly in southern Pennsylvania," says Tooker. "We were lucky that populations dropped for 2011, but we're not sure what to expect for 2012. "

#### **About the Pennsylvania Soybean Board**

The [Pennsylvania Soybean Board](#) is a farmer-controlled Board responsible for managing Pennsylvania's share of funds received from the nationwide Soybean Checkoff program. The funding is available under an assessment program, approved by Congress in 1990, under which soybean farmers contribute 50 cents of every \$100 they receive for their beans at the first point of sale. Funds are used to develop markets, educate consumers, and research new ways to utilize and produce soybeans more efficiently.

The efforts of the checkoff are directed by the United Soybean Board, composed of 69 volunteer farmer-leaders who are appointed to the national board by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

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