



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR TAN SPOT AND STRIPE RUST IN WINTER WHEAT FIELDS

Oak Hammock Marsh, Man., June 14, 2011 – Proper field scouting of spring crops is an important management practice, and winter wheat is no different. While scouting fields for weeds and insects, growers should be on the lookout for diseases that could be developing such as tan spot and stripe rust.

Growers must realize that because winter wheat produces high amounts of biomass in early wet and cool conditions, it is potentially susceptible to early disease. With proper disease management strategies, producers can produce high yields and superior net returns with their winter wheat crop.

When scouting, check low-lying areas that aren't saturated with water and along shelterbelts first. Additionally, monitor neighbouring fields as diseases can spread from infected crops nearby.

“There is really no magic bullet that can be used to eliminate a disease; however, incorporating a disease management strategy can reduce the level of severity to which a disease can have on the winter wheat crop,” says Autumn Holmes-Saltzman, winter wheat specialist for Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC). “Regular crop inspections are crucial for effective management of diseases and pests.”

Tan spot and stripe rust are two diseases that growers should be on the lookout for. Symptoms of tan spot often first appear on lower leaves as tan or brown flecks. As the disease progresses, the flecks will become lens-shaped, expand and join. A zone of bright yellow usually surrounds the dark brown centres.

In Southern Alberta, there were reports of stripe rust in the fall of 2010, which may have overwintered and could re-appear in the same areas, says Holmes-Saltzman.

Stripe Rust can be identified by the small orange/yellow pustules, which appear parallel to veins creating yellow streaks on leaves. It is best to monitor fields in the morning when new spores are distinctly yellow. Both tan spot, and stripe rust infection and sporulation are more common in cool, wet conditions, which is what many parts of the Prairies are experiencing this year. But if growers have winter wheat growing this spring, they are ahead of the game, as many acres are still too wet to seed.

To reduce the amount of infection, producers should be monitoring winter wheat and spring wheat fields for disease as spores travel by air currents, which both winter- and spring-seeded cereals are susceptible to.

Certain varieties of winter wheat are more resistant to diseases than others; however, it is important producers don't use genetic resistance as a substitute for good management practices. In case of infection, growers can treat most diseases by applying a foliar fungicide, which has been approved for use in winter

wheat. While it is important to treat leaf disease at any stage to prevent it from spreading, producers should be especially careful to protect the upper leaves and flag leaf.

If you would like to know more about scouting your winter wheat fields, visit WinterCereals.ca to find your local DUC winter wheat agronomist. DUC agronomists offer free agronomic support for winter wheat growers and industry partners.

The shared vision of Ducks Unlimited Canada and Bayer CropScience for the future of agriculture includes a stewardship model that recognizes the agricultural productivity of farmland while retaining and improving the habitat available to North America's waterfowl and other wildlife. As a result, Bayer and DUC have joined together to identify, research and promote cropping system changes that benefit the conservation of our natural resources in an economically viable way. The first step in this relationship is the **Winter Cereals: Sustainability in Action** project.

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Ducks Unlimited Canada

Conserving Canada's Wetlands

About Ducks Unlimited Canada

We are Canada's most trusted and respected conservation organization. (*Ipsos Reid and NRG Surveys*) Our mission is to conserve, restore and manage wetlands and associated habitats for waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

Further information on Ducks Unlimited Canada is available at: www.ducks.ca



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About Bayer CropScience

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the fields of health care, nutrition and high-tech materials. Bayer CropScience AG, a subsidiary of Bayer AG with annual sales of about EUR 6.83 billion (2010), is one of the world's leading innovative crop science companies in the areas of crop protection, non-agricultural pest control, seeds and traits. The company offers an outstanding range of products and extensive service backup for modern, sustainable agriculture and for non-agricultural applications. Bayer CropScience has a global workforce of about 20,700 and is represented in more than 120 countries. Further information on Bayer CropScience Canada is available at: www.bayercropscience.ca

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