NORTHEAST INDIANA

EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS

practical solutions to the toughest challenges

Whitley County Educator Helps Farmers Improve Production

The Geiger Farm in Whitley County worked with John Woodmansee, Agriculture and Natural Resources Educator, through the ***Purdue On The Farm*** program in 2023. This field scouting program uncovered insights that reshaped their crop management strategies.

Over three visits, Woodmansee assessed soil fertility, stand counts, plant tissue health, and scouted for weeds, diseases, and pests. The findings revealed an unexpected soybean cyst nematode (SCN) issue that was wreaking havoc on yields.

SCN is a microscopic, soilborne worm that often does not display aboveground plant damage. The pest was silently causing crop loss in fields the Geigers hadn't suspected.

This discovery prompted proactive changes, including adopting Peking SCN resistant soybeans paired with seed treatments. These new practices boosted yields to 50 bushels per acre where they were once experiencing complete crop loss; an impressive turnaround.

The Geigers now view nematodes as a rising threat and intend to continue these strategies in 2024 and beyond. Woodmansee's work with the Geigers not only delivered actionable insights but also transformed how these farmers approached crop protection.

"[WOODMANSEE] REALLY KIND OF OPENED OUR EYES TO THAT PROBLEM"
– GEIGER FAMILY

The Geiger Family (pictured above) worked with John Woodmansee to improve their soybean production protices.

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Adams County Uses Soybean Plots to Improve Production and Give Back to the Community

Brad Kohlhagen in Adams County organizes annual soybean trials to help his farmers find the best varieties for improved production. This year saw record-breaking rain in April, a steamy, dry summer, and soybean varieties battling it out for top performance.

The soybean trials spanned three maturity groups (2.5–3.0, 3.1–3.4, and 3.5–3.8), the research highlights the success of Liberty traits in conquering weed pressure and boosting yields. Early-maturity varieties emerged as the unexpected stars, capitalizing on late-summer rains while their later counterparts weathered extreme heat. Yield averages topped out at 71.4 bushels per acre, demonstrating the potential for growth despite challenging conditions.

This collaboration between dedicated farmers, seed companies, and Purdue Extension isn't just about data; it's about shaping the future of agriculture. The trials fuel scholarships for future agricultural leaders and help local farmers refine strategies for maximizing productivity.

These trials and reports are more than numbers; they highlight the desire for innovation within agriculture and chronicle the weather and plant conditions leading to success or failure each year. For a copy, please contact Brad Kohlhagen in Adams County at bkohlhag@purdue.edu.

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EA/EOU

Local farmer filling the weigh wagon as soybean test plots are harvested in Adams County in 2024.

Purdue On The Farm

Purdue On The Farm is designed to connect Purdue Extension with our clientele and partners to build and enhance relationships, to understand perception and practices, to observe, to generate data to underpin recommendations, and to build professional capacity within our Extension network.

We are building the program through four tiers: (1) Survey, (2) Field Monitoring (e.g., disease, pest, challenge v. successes), (3) Demonstration, and (4) On-Farm Research. Relationships will be built throughout this continuum while serving, providing education, troubleshooting, discussions of latest products, and data generation to be aggregated for larger impacts.

The program is designed to connect the expertise from Purdue University to the farmers where they are. It allows the farmers to work and gather the information in a way that best suits their operation.

Purdue University wants to help farmers adopt practical, research-based applications to address farm management challenges.

Taken from the Purdue On The Farm website. More information can be found at extension.purdue.edu/anr/purdue_on_the_farm