Wheat Entomology Newsletter 2, May 19, 2025

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Wheat Stem Sawfly (WSS) Updates

Wheat stem sawflies have started to emerge, and we captured several individuals in New Raymer on May 8th **(Figure 1)**. Typically, males emerge first, followed by females. Males emerge earlier, allowing them to mate with virgin females, increasing their reproductive fitness.

Our degree-day model predicts the following for Weld and nearby counties:

May 3rd (154DD) for 5% emergence
May 20th (223DD) for the peak

The cool and wet weather early this week may delay their emergence, but we predict that sawflies will become more abundant later in the week.

Where to Scout:
Wheat fields are particularly vulnerable along edges adjacent to stubble from the previous year. This is because adult wheat stem sawflies emerge from the stubble and move into the current season's crop. In the area shown in Figure X, scouting efforts should be concentrated along the path indicated by the red arrow, where sawfly density is expected to be highest. A sweep net or bug net is used to capture adult sawflies during scouting.

When to Look for Adult Sawflies:
Adult sawfly emergence is influenced by weather conditions. Rainfall, strong winds, and cold temperatures can delay or suppress their activity. Therefore, scouting should be prioritized on warm, calm mornings when adults are most likely to be active. Scouting during poor weather may give the false impression that sawflies are absent.

Project Highlight: Wheat Genetics Research Center (Kansas State University) screening wild wheat species for novel sources of resistance
This ongoing project is conducted in collaboration with the Wheat Genetics Research Center at Kansas State University and is funded by CWAC. Wheat lines are grown in cone-tainers in our greenhouse and then exposed to natural wheat stem sawfly infestation in the field. Since sawflies cannot be reared in a laboratory setting, we must transport the plants to infested field sites. This year, we plan to conduct infestations in Akron and Byers due to a significant decline in sawfly populations in the New Raymer and Orchard areas.

Wheat Diseases

For wheat disease updates by Dr. Robyn Roberts, please see:
https://coloradowheat.org/category/news-events/wheat-pest-and-disease-update/

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the tireless work of CSU researchers and extension agents for reporting pest problems throughout the state.