May 18, 2015

To: Those Involved in Wheat Production

**Wheat Production**

**Armyworms Alert** – True armyworms have been reported in high numbers in wheat fields. They are a threat in the spring about the time heading starts to occur. Wheat is less attractive than some of the other small grains, but thick, vigorously growing fields can attract heavy infestations. Occasionally when wheat starts to mature, armyworms will move up from leaf feeding and cut the wheat heads from the plant stems. Because this type of damage can have such serious consequences on yield, close field observations are required. Treatment should be made if head cutting is beginning to occur and armyworms are present.

**Stripe Rust** – Stripe rust has also been observed in wheat fields. Stripe rust is called yellow rust in most parts of the world. It can be distinguished from other rusts by the dusty yellow urediniospores produced in lesions that grow systemically in leaves. Infection spreads to nearby plants and creates distinct ‘hot-spots’ that can be seen from a distance by heading time. Symptoms on upper leaves are restricted by leaf veins and develop into the characteristic long, slender stripes from which stripe rust gets its name. Depending on variety, heads may become infected and yellow spores can be produced on the tissue surrounding the seed. Near crop maturity, black pustules (telia) that do not open form in stripes on both sides of the leaves.

All fungicides listed in the newest MP154, Arkansas Plant Disease Control Products Guide should be effective against rusts. Chemical control is more effective when rust diseases are identified on susceptible varieties early in the growing season. In fields planted with moderately resistant or resistant varieties, a fungicide application may not be necessary even if some disease occurs. Fields planted with moderately susceptible or susceptible varieties should be scouted regularly, and any sign of disease may warrant a fungicide application (particularly in the case of stripe rust). In fields planted with very susceptible varieties, two applications may be necessary to achieve a moderate level of control – another good reason not to plant very susceptible varieties, particularly to stripe rust.

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Sincerely,

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