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Alfalfa Nematodes...

What Farmers Should Know !

What are Nematodes ?

Alfalfa Nematodes are microscopic worm-like animals that feed on alfalfa plants and may cause yield or stand loss.

What Types of Nematodes damage alfalfa ?

Numerous Nematodes live in the soil, however only certain types damage alfalfa.

The most economically important are:

Stem Nematode, Root Knot nematodes, and Root Lesion nematodes.

Minor alfalfa Nematodes include: *dagger, needle, pin, spiral, stubby, and stunt nematodes*

How Do I know If I Have Harmful Nematodes In My Field ?

First look for the field symptoms
**COMMON TO MOST PLANT
PARASITIC NEMATODES:**

- ◆Uneven Plant Growth,
- ◆Circular stunted areas
- ◆Yield reduction



Circular Stunted Areas, uneven Plant Growth

How Do I Confirm That I Have Harmful Nematodes In My Field ?

Have soil and/or plant samples checked by lab, to identify type and number of nematodes.

How Do I Prevent or Control Nematodes ?

- ◆Nematodes are spread by any means that moves infested soil or plant residue throughout the field (cultivating, harvesting, and irrigation).
- ◆Plant a non-host crop in the rotation to reduce nematode build up.
- ◆Chemical control is generally considered uneconomical since it involves soil fumigation
- ◆**Best Control is Resistant Varieties.**

Where Do I Find Nematode Resistant Varieties ????

The following are Specific Nematode Symptoms for the major nematodes:

Stem Nematode (*Ditylenches dipsaci*)

- ◆ White Flagging—Individual susceptible plants scattered throughout the field. Displaying a very white stem or stems “White Flags”
- ◆ Swollen crown buds with shortened internode
- ◆ Symptoms most common during cool and moist periods of the year or under sprinkler irrigation.
- ◆ Alternate host: Sainfoin, and potatoes.



White Flagging symptom of Stem Nematode damage



Swollen Crown Buds

Root Knot Nematode (*Meloidgyne species*)

- ◆ Major symptoms seen on roots in the form of small oval galls.
- ◆ Stunting of plant and tap root with increased lateral root growth.
- ◆ Alternate Host Crop: potato, sugarbeet, bean, and tomato.



oval Nematode galls

**For Additional Information
Contact our Sales Staff at**

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Lesion Nematode (*Pratylenchus species*)

- ◆ Major symptoms occur in the form of black or brown lesions on the outside of the root. Lesions may become so severe to completely darkened taproot.
- ◆ Taproots appear stunted with reduced lateral root growth
- ◆ Alternate Host Crop: corn
- ◆ Alternate Host Crop: potato, sugarbeet, bean, and tomato.

Susceptible Alfalfa Roots



Resistant Alfalfa Roots

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