

SOYBEAN RESEARCH PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR PROFILE – ADRIANA MURILLO-WILLIAMS

Farmer Blog



Adriana Murillo-Williams, Agronomy Extension Educator, Penn State Extension

Why did you decide to pursue a career that includes soybean research?

I have loved plants since I was a child in Costa Rica, influenced in part by my grandma and my dad. I chose to study agronomy and found that I really liked plant pathology. While earning master's and doctorate degrees at Iowa State University, I fell in love with the Midwestern landscape and soybeans. Then, I wanted to gain extension experience, which grew my desire to help farmers.

What research topic have you completed in the past or are working on now that could have or has had the most significant impact on soybean production?

I know how harmful soybean cyst nematodes are to soybeans, based on what I learned while studying in Iowa. Nationally, SCN is the top yield-robbing pathogen in soybeans. I want to know where SCN is in Pennsylvania and raise awareness so farmers can protect their soybean yields.

How has the soybean checkoff enhanced your ability to find answers to production problems for farmers?

The checkoff provides funding for some of my work, and I am forever thankful for that funding and trust. This support allows me to find answers to questions important to soybean production.

Within your area of expertise, what are the top two or three general recommendations you would offer farmers to improve their management practices?

- *Find out what is in your fields. Farmers need to know if they have SCN, and soil tests will provide that information.*
- *Rotate fields between soybeans and non-host crops. And with soybeans, rotate*

sources of genetic SCN resistance.

Within your area of expertise, what do you consider to be critical soybean research needs that can impact the profitability of famers in the future?

Once SCN has been identified in a field, we need to show the impact of SCN management practices. Farmers need to learn to use all available tools and understand the value of proactively managing SCN. Research will help farmers see the difference between resistant and susceptible soybean varieties and the usefulness of seed-applied nematicides. We also need to better understand the role of cover crops in SCN management, especially because adoption of cover crops has been so successful in Pennsylvania. Research will help develop SCN and cover crop management recommendations specific to Pennsylvania.

SRIN articles:

[Proactive SCN Monitoring and Management](#)



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