

# SOYBEAN RESEARCH PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR PROFILE – ANNA HODGSON

... Farmer Blog



Anna Hodgson, Extension Educator, Field and Forage Crops, Penn State Extension

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

*I earned a master's degree in entomology, with a desire to combine that knowledge with plants and crops. I started assessing integrated pest management, or IPM strategies, in no-till cropping systems. That work naturally led me to a career in extension, where I use my knowledge and experience to help farmers raise their crops.*

## **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?**

*Up to 20% of yield loss in no-till acreage in the Mid-Atlantic is due to slugs. If we can figure out how to better predict slug activity, we will be able to help farmers more effectively manage this pest and prevent that damage, protecting soybean yields.*

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

*In Pennsylvania, the soy checkoff has funded significant extension research. It provides the support for much of our current practical research.*

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

- *Plant at an appropriate time, when soil temperatures are warm enough to support seed germination.*
- *Cover crops provide benefits both for soil health and as habitat for beneficial insects that are natural enemies of key pests.*
- *Scout fields frequently to know what is happening in them. Farmers need to get out in their fields to understand current pressures, rather than just driving past them.*

**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?**

*Research on how recent weird weather patterns affect crops and pest pressure would help farmers better gauge future pest problems. Farmers would also benefit from more research on natural enemies to key pests and how to better use beneficial insects to manage pests and protect yields.*

**SRIN articles:**

[Integrated Practices Manage Hard-to-Predict Slug Pressure](#)



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