NICK SEITER – SOYBEAN RESEARCH PROFILE

Farmer Blog



Nick Seiter, field crop entomology research assistant professor, University of Illinois

Why did you decide to pursue a career that includes soybean research?
I love science for its own sake, but the problem-solving aspect of applied ag research is what really motivates me on the job. It is rewarding to see my work translate into recommendations that can improve the economic outlook for soybean pest management while reducing input costs.

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?
During my Ph.D., I developed management recommendations for the kudzu bug, which was an invasive soybean pest in the southeastern U.S. We had to start from scratch with an insect that, like many invasive pests, was only a minor concern in its native range. Within a relatively short time, we developed economic thresholds and chemical control recommendations still in use in the Southeast. We are investigating sampling and management guidelines for defoliating pests in the North Central region, as well as residual activity of insecticides in soybeans.

How has the soybean checkoff enhanced your ability to find answers to production problems for farmers?
The great thing about working with the soybean checkoff is that you know your work is important to the farmers who are funding it. The checkoff programs fund practical, decision-support research that bridges the gap between basic science funded by the federal government and product efficacy trials funded by the seed and chemical industry.

Within your area of expertise, what are the top two or three general recommendations you would offer farmers to improve their management practices?
With insect management, it's impossible to make an informed management decision without

scouting. Understand your key pest species and visit fields regularly to determine not just whether insect pests are present but how numerous they are in relation to economic thresholds.

Within your area of expertise, what do you consider to be critical soybean research needs that can impact the profitability of farmers in the future?
Despite the technological advances in ag in recent years and increasing scale of production, pest monitoring techniques are essentially the same as 30 years ago. We need more efficient ways to accurately assess pest populations and damage potential to make better control decisions.

SRIN articles:

Cereal Rye Cover Crop Termination Timing Effects on Soybean Yield Across the Midwest

Soybean Stem Disease Survey Defines Issues in Illinois Fields

SOYBEAN RESEARCH & INFORMATION NETWORK

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