U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative

FHB Tool Talk

Dear Extension Specialists, Crop Consultants, and Grower Organizations,

It's time to start prepping for spring planting of wheat, durum, and barley. Planting is the time when management decisions can be made to help reduce FHB in your field and conversely DON in your harvested grain. Here are some tips from the USWBSI to aid in managing FHB this season.

Tip #1: Avoid planting susceptible wheat and barley varieties.
Disease management starts with variety selection as it's your best bet at reducing FHB and DON. Land grant universities in many states conduct official variety trials and rate varietal resistance to FHB. Search your state's land grant university websites for variety trial results to determine a variety's level of resistance to FHB.

Tip #2: Plant varieties with different maturities.
If you cannot plant your crop early due to weather, try to plant at least a couple varieties with different maturity dates to spread out heading by about a week.

Tip #3: Seed treatments do not prevent FHB.
Fungicide seed treatments can reduce stand losses caused by Fusarium crown rot but do not protect against FHB. If you are using saved seed, make sure to clean the seed to remove scabby kernels thoroughly. Conduct a germination test and adjust your seeding rate accordingly. Try to avoid seed lots with less than 85% germination.

Tip #4: FHB risk is increased when planting wheat or barley into no-till corn stover.
While tillage does bury residue that could harbor inoculum, it may undermine soil conservation efforts and soil health practices. Avoid seeding wheat and barley into corn debris whenever possible as *Fusarium graminearum*, the fungus that causes FHB, thrives on corn stover. If planting directly into corn stover is necessary, chop the debris as small as possible during and/or immediately after corn harvest to reduce the size of the stover as this will speed up decomposition.



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More FHB Resources for Extension, Crop Consultants, and Grower Organizations.

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U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative
495 Borlaug Hall
1991 Upper Buford Circle
St. Paul, MN 55108
nfo@scabusa.org

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