U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative

FHB Tool Talk

Dear Extension Workers, Consultants, and Grower Organizations,

It's time to start prepping for planting season. Winter wheat and barley are usually planted in the fall after the Hessian Fly free date. Here at the USWBSI we have some planting tips to aid in managing Fusarium Head Blight (FHB).

Tip #1: Avoid planting susceptible wheat and barley varieties.
Many state agricultural land grant universities conduct official variety trials and rate varietal resistance to FHB. Search your state's land grant university websites for results to determine a variety's level of resistance to FHB.

Tip #2: Practice good crop rotation with a non-host crop.
Avoid planting winter wheat and barley following corn or other small grains as these are hosts for *Fusarium graminearum*, the causal agent of FHB. These crop residues can increase population levels of the fungus in the field and increase the risk of disease developing.

- It is advised to rotate production with non-host crops (i.e., soybeans and alfalfa).
- Studies from Minnesota indicate that fields previously planted with soybeans had lower *Fusarium* inoculum, FHB, and deoxynivalenol (DON) compared to fields previously planted with corn or wheat.

Tip #3: Conventional tillage can reduce the primary inoculum source.
Before planting a new crop of cereals, bury or reduce crop residues from corn or grassy crops through the use of conventional tillage (particularly in fields with large amounts of corn stubble), or by discing.

- Complete or partial burial of crop residue with a moldboard, chisel plow or by discing can reduce the amount of *Fusarium* inoculum, and ultimately FHB and DON.

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Sincerely,
USWBSI Networking and Facilitation Office (NFO) Team