



PEST SEVERITY TRAINING TOOL

Soybean producers and consultants constantly deal with invasive insect and disease pests of soybeans during the growing season. In most of these infestations, a decision must be made as to whether or not remedial action will be required to mitigate the potential damage caused by these pests. This is an important decision because it involves an expense related to the remedial action that might be necessary.

The [Crop Protection Network](#) has devised an online [Disease Severity and Defoliation Training](#) module that can be used to estimate/assess disease and defoliation levels on leaves of field crops. The objective of this training module is to minimize the overestimation of disease severity or insect infestation when crop scouts, researchers, and producers are assessing the need for remedial measures.

Clicking the “Scout Soybeans” tab of the module will access the portion that is devoted to [Soybean Disease Severity](#) that contains aids for rating leaf infestation intensity by the diseases [Cercospora leaf blight](#), [frogeye leaf spot](#), [Septoria brown spot](#), and [soybean rust](#). There is also a [General Soybean Disease Severity Training](#) category that can be used to assess leaf infestation levels of diseases in general, as well as a category for assessing the [amount of insect defoliation](#) of leaves.

Clicking any of the above six categories will access a picture of a soybean leaf with a sliding bar that can be used to see a soybean leaf with 0 to 100% of leaf infestation/lost leaf area resulting from disease or insect infestation. An additional resource in the module is an overview within each of the six designated categories, along with links to additional information resources for those categories.

Click [here](#) for estimates of soybean yield lost to diseases in the Midsouth states—*Cercospora* leaf blight, frogeye leaf spot, and *Septoria* brown spot are major contributors to those losses. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for White Papers on this website that contain guidelines for managing diseases and insects, respectively, in Midsouth soybeans. Click [here](#) for Insect Management Guidelines from Midsouth states that give treatment recommendations for various insect pests. These recommendations are based on percentage leaf defoliation during both vegetative and reproductive development periods of soybean.

It is recognized that this training tool will result in a subjective estimation of leaf damage caused by disease and insect pests. However, repeated use of the tool will allow the user(s) to become consistent in their leaf damage rating(s) so that the proper remedial action can be applied consistently when required.

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