

Alabama Soybean Commission Summary

Monitoring Soybean Sentinel Plots for Early Detection of Soybean Rust

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The soybean sentinel plot program was established with additional support from the USDA. The sentinel plot system was used for early detection of Asian soybean rust in Alabama and the southeast. A soybean sentinel plot was a 50 x 50 ft stand of soybeans planted approximately 2 weeks prior to the standard planting date for an area. Twenty soybean sentinel plots were established around the State. In addition, 15 kudzu patch sentinel plots were also identified. Soybean and kudzu sentinel plots were monitored weekly throughout the season. Information obtained from the sentinel plot system was used to support the USDA National Soybean Rust Information web site (SBRUSA.NET) and the Auburn University Soybean Rust Hotline (1-800-446-0388). By the end of 2006, soybean rust was detected in 26 counties in Alabama. This included 5 soybean sentinel plots, 8 commercial soybean fields, and 24 random kudzu patches. The system allowed for early detection of the disease and gave growers some lead-time to determine if a fungicide application was necessary for their operations.