




2023 Pest ID Sessions

RELEVANCE

Agronomic Consulting Sector on the rise 

There is a greater emphasis on the successful identification of pests, diseases and weeds.

Improper Identification



Leads to improper or ineffective pest management.



Leads to the misuse, ineffective, or wasted pesticide application.



Agronomic Consultants

(In Need of) Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) credentials

- Allow for fertilizer recommendations or IPM plans.
- Provide growers with updated information.

RESPONSE

The Kent County Pest ID Sessions included both a spring and fall program to address seasonal differences.



SPRING Sessions: Early-season pests




FALL Sessions: Mid-late summer Preparing for small grain pests



Extension Specialists

- Discussed Specifics including weed and insect identification and plant diseases.
- Focused on pest ID by providing tools and recommendations for dealing with pests.

THE GOAL

-  Provide updated information to local crop consultants.
-  Connect them with UD Extension resources.

Program Offerings

Continuing Education Credits

- Pesticide
- Certified Crop Advisor

RESULTS

25

Total in attendance for the two programs

24

Completed an evaluation 

Evaluation Questions:



• Will you adopt new practices for identifying pests and diseases?
83.3% or 20 of the 24 respondents confirmed their adoption.

• Did you learn anything new on methods or calculations of thresholds?
75% or 18 out of 24 respondents indicated yes, they did



RELEVANCE

There has been significant growth and turnover in recent years within the agronomic consulting sector. In the region, many individuals have started their own independent agronomic consulting business or are employed by private companies. The significant number of changes that have happened in this industry have put a greater emphasis on the successful identification of pests, diseases and weeds.

Without proper identification, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools are futile and could potentially lead to the misuse of various pesticides or the rise of more tolerant pests and diseases. Agronomic consultants also need continuing education credits to maintain a pesticide license and Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) credentials. These certifications allow consultants to satisfy the demands of their growers with fertilizer recommendations or IPM plans. Additionally, they provide growers with updated information necessary to make accurate scientific recommendations.

RESPONSE

In 2023, the Kent County Pest ID Sessions included both a spring and fall program to address seasonal differences consultants may experience throughout the year. The spring program focused on early-season pests, which can cause severe damage to newly emerged corn or soybeans, while the fall program focused on preparing for small grain pests that are prevalent in the Delmarva region. Extension Specialists discussed specifics, including weed and insect identification and plant diseases. Specialists also expanded on the critical topic of pest ID by providing tools and recommendations for dealing with the pests discussed. The goal of the two-part program was to provide updated information to local crop consultants and salespeople and connect them with University of Delaware Extension resources. The programs offered several continuing education credits to attendees, including pesticide and Certified Crop Advisor credits.

RESULTS

The Kent County Pest ID Sessions were intended to provide well-rounded pest identification techniques and continuing education opportunities and develop connections between consultants and the University of Delaware Extension. During the two programs, 24 out of the 25 individuals who were in attendance completed the evaluation. Evaluation questions asked included:

Will you adopt new practices for identifying pests and diseases?

- 83.3% or 20 of the 24 respondents confirmed their adoption.

Did you learn anything new on methods or calculations of thresholds?

- 75% or 18 out of 24 respondents indicated yes, they did

This included contact information for the specialists and agents, and the UD Plant Diagnostic Clinic.

PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT

Pest ID education sessions make Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools more effective and prevent the misuse of pesticides and the rise of more tolerant pests.