

News

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE**

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**

For Immediate Release:

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Soybean Rust Discovered in Maryland near the Delaware Border Discovery will not affect this year's crop

Robert Mulrooney, member of the Delaware Soybean Rust Team, has informed the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) that soybean rust has been discovered in a sentinel plot in Worcester County, MD, just over the line from Selbyville, DE. The first ever discovery in Maryland or Delaware was in plant samples collected by DDA Plant Industries staff on October 23, and incubated by the University of Delaware (UD) until October 28. The University of Delaware's examination discovered a pustule consistent with soybean rust, *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*, on the leaves of the sample. The diagnosis was confirmed by USDA APHIS.

According to Dr. Arv Grybauskas, University of Maryland Extension plant pathologist, the 2008 Delaware/Maryland soybean crop will not be affected by the fungus. Dr. Grybauskas said, "It happened at the very end of the growing season, and in fact frost had already damaged the upper most foliage of this extremely late soybean sentinel plot. There is no remaining green foliage in this sentinel plot and all commercial fields are in various stages of harvest. Furthermore, soybean rust is not seed-borne and can't overwinter in our region."

In regard to the significance of the find and future Maryland/Delaware soybean crops, Dr. Grybauskas said, "The key message to take from this find is that soybean rust can blow into our region and under the right combination of temperature, moisture and plant susceptibility could cause infection in our soybean crop. It will take a combination of unusual events to provide those favorable conditions earlier in a growing season to be a significant threat. Nevertheless, we must keep vigilant to protect this significant component of our agricultural economy in the future."

Dr. Faith Kuehn, DDA Plant Industries administrator, said, "We have been sampling soybean sentinel plots and fields for four years, in anticipation of rust reaching Delaware. We will continue to monitor for soybean rust in 2009, but hope that any future detections will also occur only in the late season. If not, a number of effective fungicides have been registered for use in Delaware."

Robert Mulrooney said, "Our ability to detect soybean rust gives us the information to provide growers with an early warning in time to take protective measures in case it should appear earlier in the season when the crop could be at risk. Our detection program has been a very effective tool for monitoring the presence of soybean rust in the United States and preventing this disease from causing needless losses from rust or unnecessary spraying when the threat of rust is not present."

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I can't thank our soybean rust team enough for their diligence in this effort over the past season. It has been a great partnership between Delaware Extension, the DDA, USDA/APHIS and the growers that have cooperated with us since the beginning in 2005."

"MD and DE enjoy a strong cooperative relationship which is shown by this opportunity to work together to safeguard soybeans on the Delmarva Peninsula. The University of Maryland and MDA also are surveying for soybean rust in Maryland, and all samples to date have been negative," said Carol Holko, MDA program manager for Plant Protection and Weed Management.

In 2007, Maryland farmers harvested 10.3 million bushels of soybeans valued at \$107 million on 380,000 acres; and Delaware farmers harvested 4.03 million bushels of soybeans valued at \$36.9 million on 155,000 acres.

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