

David Hallauer
District Extension Agent, Crops & Soils

Soybean SDS

If soybean Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) reared its ugly head in *your* fields this summer, harvest is providing you an opportunity to see how it affected yields. While losses are difficult to quantify – particularly this year with multiple late season factors affecting yield – heavy disease pressure can result in premature defoliation and fewer/smaller seeds.

The presence of SDS *this* year does not automatically equate to future problems. We have tended to see SDS in Northeast Kansas in years with vigorous plant growth, leading to lots of biomass with high yield potential. Moisture (particularly at planting) needed to do so sets us up for pathogen infection early in the growing season. The disease then lies somewhat dormant, showing up later as it moves through the plant, potentially reducing yield as it does. If SDS only shows up occasionally, maybe it's not much of a concern. If, however, you are looking at ways to combat it with *next* year's management, consider the following options.

Cool/damp soil conditions favor SDS infection that often occurs within a few days of germination. For fields previously exhibiting SDS, manage the planting window to avoid favorable infection conditions.

Resistant varieties are an option. Few have excellent resistance, and most are susceptible at least to a degree, but in higher yield (60+ bushels per acre) environments, susceptible varieties can yield as much as 40 percent *less* than resistant varieties where SDS is present.

Seed treatment fungicides can have some efficacy against SDS (foliar fungicides do not...), but they should be carefully for effectiveness. For more information on what works – and what may not – contact me via any of our District Offices.

Consider corn harvest practices as well since kernels left in the field may harbor the SDS fungus. Harvest management to minimize kernels on the ground can help with a number of issues – and reduce SDS risk as well.

What about the tie to SCN (Soybean Cyst Nematode)? We can have SDS without SCN – and vice versa, but research has linked the presence of SCN to higher levels of SDS (and increased yield loss). If you have fields with SDS not previously been evaluated for SCN, this fall might provide a good opportunity for SCN testing to eliminate it as a contributing factor.

For more information on Soybean Sudden Death Syndrome, check out this article from the Soybean Research and Information Network (and available upon request at any District Office):

<https://soybeanresearchinfo.com/soybean-disease/sudden-death-syndrome/> .