

## **Soybean Rust Workshop 2008 Quincy Florida**

### **Purpose:**

A special Soybean Rust Workshop was held September 17-19, 2008 at the University of Florida's 1100-acre North Florida Research & Education Center (NFREC), located in Quincy, Florida (near Tallahassee). The primary purpose of the workshop was for key Ontario stakeholders to gain better familiarity with identifying and managing soybean rust. The workshop provided participants with soybean rust updates, research results, field demonstrations, "hands-on" identification and other learning opportunities from key researchers in a "unique" learning environment which was not available in Canada.

### **Methods:**

Of the 80+ attendees, 25 represented Ontario soybean stakeholders from growers (Ontario Soybean Growers), government (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) extension), AAFC and the University of Guelph researchers, industry (seed and chemical) and crop consultants. The remaining participants came from Nebraska, North Carolina, Missouri and South Dakota. The workshop topics included a mix of classroom lectures, microscope training, field observations and management trials of soybean rust. The classroom sessions focused on the history and spread of soybean rust, prediction models, genetic host resistance, soybean rust monitoring, and management of soybean rust.

Soybean rust was first carried to the southern U.S. from South America in 2004, by Hurricane Ivan. The disease is now present year round in Florida, and the NFREC in Quincy has been identified as a location with consistent soybean rust pressure and provides a location to conduct studies on soybean rust management for North America researchers. The Center is funded by several different state soybean industry associations and the North Central Soybean Research Program.

The Ontario Soybean Rust Coalition, including OSG, OMAFRA and other industry stakeholders have used the Quincy Research Center for variety (germplasm) development of potential Canadian rust-resistant lines and fungicide trials to help growers deal with soybean rust in Ontario. Attendance at the short course for some of the Ontario participants was funded in part through the Agriculture Adaptation Council's CanAdvance program, while the costs associated with the delivery of the workshop (meals, speakers, facilities, etc) was funded through the North Central Soybean Research Program which is funded through the US soybean check-off.

Participants were asked to rate their knowledge on various topics before and after the workshop. Many of the questions assessed the individual's familiarity with soybean rust. Survey results indicate that 95% of participants improved their confidence in diagnosing soybean rust and over 82% improved their knowledge on how to manage soybean rust. Also at the conclusion of the workshop, many participants commented they still respect the damage potential of the disease but they are no longer scared of soybean rust. They noted this was a result of the efforts put in place in North America to track and monitor the disease and since they saw firsthand that it is a manageable disease.

**Next Steps:**

Many of the participants commented how another workshop at the North Florida Research and Education Center should be planned for the future so other people from Ontario can gain experience with soybean rust. The possibility of another soybean rust learning opportunity is being investigated.

**Acknowledgements:**

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