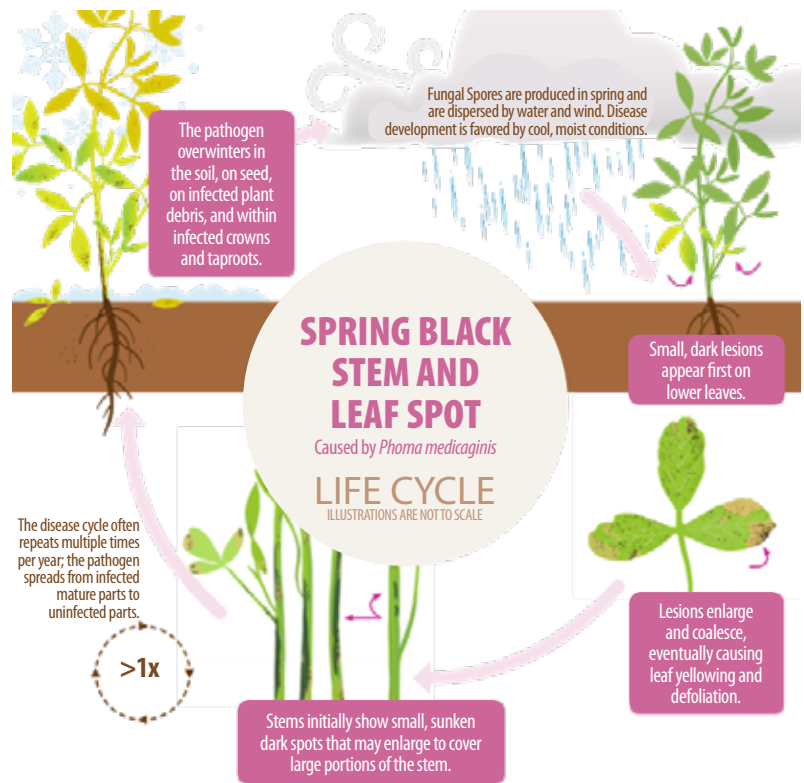


Crop Protection Network Alfalfa Diseases & Pest Website

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Managing disease and insect pests in alfalfa begins with regular field scouting and sampling techniques. Improper identification and pest sampling techniques may lead to inappropriate and costly management attempts, or lack of adequate management altogether, reducing farm income and increasing pesticide-related risks to the environment and applicators. However, it can be frustrating to try to find information on alfalfa pathogens and insect pests. Beginning in 2015, the Crop Protection Network set out to provide unbiased, research-based information to farmers and agricultural personnel to help with decisions related to protecting alfalfa, corn, small grains, and soybean through partnerships with university and Extension specialists. Recently, with funding from the North Central Integrated Pest Management Center, web pages providing education about proper alfalfa pest identification and management were added to a centralized location also containing information about other crops alfalfa farmers likely grow (e.g. corn, soybean, wheat). The site can be accessed at: cropprotectionnetwork.org.



Once at the Crop Protection Network site, clicking on the Encyclopedia tab will take you to a page where you can select the crop; category (e.g., disease, disorder, insect); and where and when the disease or pest was observed. The encyclopedia entries have information on the symptoms and signs of the disease or pest, management information, and photos of plants in the field. For four diseases and five insects, an illustrated life cycle is provided to help farmers understand the impacts of management. In total, 23 diseases and 13 insect pests of alfalfa are currently available in the encyclopedia. In addition, a section on disorders such as herbicide injury, nutrient deficiencies, and winter injury will soon be added. Alfalfa injury caused by herbicide can be confused with symptoms caused by diseases or insects, and symptoms of nutrient deficiencies are sometimes hard to differentiate from one another.

The site also includes many other resources. Under 'publications' there are numerous curated publications written by expert scientists in the field to dig a little deeper into different topics related to pests and diseases. The 'tools' tab has a yield loss calculator that queries multiple sources of information to return estimates of losses from diseases and insect pests on corn, soybean, and wheat – highly useful information for industry agronomists, researchers, extension workers, commodity groups, and funding agencies. Additional resources include past and upcoming webinars (with associated quizzes for obtaining CCA continuing education credits), web books, and additional disease and pest images. Currently, the alfalfa team is producing short videos on methods and technologies related to certain diseases and pests, such as fungicide decisions. Crop Protection Network also produces a free monthly newsletter, *Crop Circles*, which tracks trending publications and research updates.

It is anticipated the creation and improvement of an easily accessible and interactive alfalfa pest and disorder identification and management resource will increase the ability of farmers to apply IPM principles and properly manage important pests and disorders. Check out cropprotectionnetwork.org and take advantage of all the new resources available!