Oregon State University OSU Extension Service

Ergot Alert Newsletter

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Central Oregon Edition

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Welcome to the sixth issue of the 2016 Ergot Alert Newsletter, brought to you by Oregon State University Extension Service and USDA-ARS, and sponsored by the Washington Turfgrass Seed Commission, the Oregon Seed Council, the Oregon Department of Agriculture Alternatives for Field Burning Research Financial Assistance Program, the Columbia Basin Grass Seed Growers, the Jefferson County Seed Growers Association, and the Union County Grass Seed Growers Association. The goal of this newsletter is to provide timely information about ergot spore production to Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass seed growers and field personnel in central Oregon, the Columbia Basin, and the Grande Ronde Valley in an effort to aid in decisions related to ergot management during the course of the 2016 growing season.

April 19 thru June 7 Spore Trapping:

A spore trap was setup in artificially-infested plots located at the Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center (COARC) in Jefferson County, Oregon. Spore trapping was initiated on April 19, 2016 and spore trap drums are changed every Tuesday.

Spores were detected for the first time this season on May 1, 2016 and a total of 3,634 spores have been captured at the central Oregon KBG-5 site to date.

Spores were captured every day during the week of June 1-7, with over 1,300 spores captured during this period (Fig. 1).

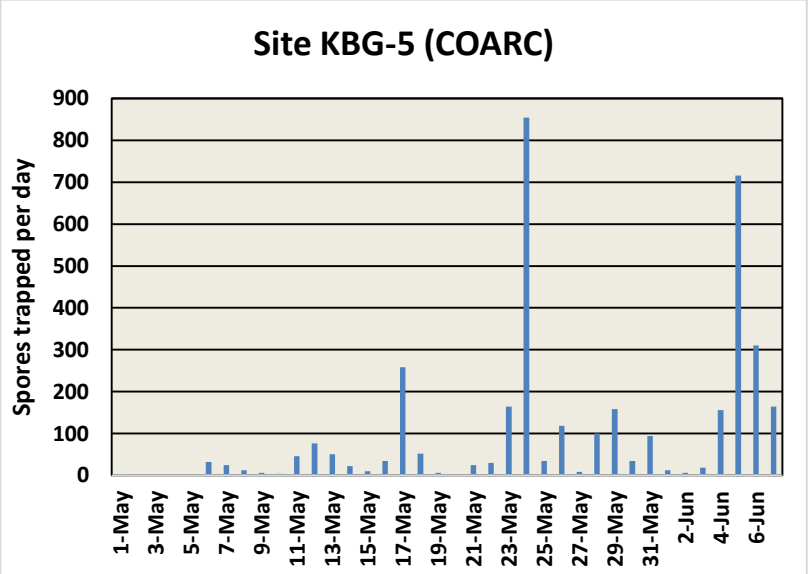

Fig. 1. Daily spore counts of *Claviceps purpurea*, the ergot pathogen, at artificially infested plots located in Jefferson Co., OR in 2016.

Cumulative Degree Days (Jan 1 thru June 14):

Air: 683 Soil (4" depth): 906

In 2014-2015 ergot spores were first detected when cumulative air degree days were between 295 and 332 and cumulative soil degree days were between 176 and 257. This year, the first spore was observed when cumulative air degree days were 255 and cumulative soil degree days were 195. ***Spore production in 2014 and 2015 continued until cumulative air degree days were between 582 and 657 and cumulative soil degree days were between 649 and 692.***

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Ergot Management Recommendations

- Cultivars at the COARC Kentucky bluegrass cultivar evaluation trial have finished flowering. The window for fungicide applications (Feekes 10.51) for protection against ergot infection has passed for early, mid, and late-flowering cultivars. Fungicide applications for ergot are protective not curative.
- Some cultivars in certain areas of Jefferson County may be cut as early as next week.
- Field scouting for honeydew at this time can help identify infected fields which may present difficulties during harvest and seed cleaning operations. Prioritize monitoring efforts in fields that were infected last year, as well as, fields in close proximity to previously infected fields. Map or collect GPS coordinates of areas within fields that have honeydew and/or sclerotia and monitor sites in 2017. It is relatively easy to make maps using GoogleEarth (freeware) by uploading coordinates from handheld GPS units.

Ergot IPM and Biocontrol Survey

Earlier this year we obtained funding from the USDA Western IPM center to research potential biocontrol options for ergot. One component of this research involves a survey of growers and stakeholders to document the importance of ergot to the grass seed industry, learn about grower/stakeholder perceptions of biocontrol, and identify potential barriers that prevent the use of biocontrol options.

Please take a few minutes to complete the short, online (smartphone friendly) survey at:
http://survey.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cx7QwGQUWjAvZl3

Thank you for your on-going support!

Please contact Jeremiah Dung, Plant Pathologist, with any questions, comments or ergot observations at the OSU Central Oregon Agricultural Research Center at 850 NW Dogwood Lane, OR, 97741,
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