

New Wheat Disease Shows Its Colors

By Mary Corp

A new wheat disease, soilborne wheat mosaic virus, is occurring in southern Walla Walla and northern Umatilla counties according to Tim Murray, and Dick Smiley, WSU and OSU Pathologists, respectively. Growers and field consultants are seeing the yellow patches of wheat mainly in the Spofford area of Oregon and in the Mill Creek and Russell Creek areas east of Walla Walla. The wheat foliage exhibits mosaic

symptoms similar to wheat streak mosaic, which is already known to occur in the region.



Once other common disease problems had been eliminated as suspects, samples were sent to a commercial lab in Indiana. The lab provided a positive response for the presence of soilborne wheat mosaic virus in both samples they evaluated.

In Oregon, this virus was first detected in winter wheat in the Willamette Valley in 1994 and in winter wheat in western Umatilla County in 2005 and 2006. The disease is transmitted from root to root by the fungus *Polymyxa graminis*. Resistant varieties have been developed in the Northern Plains states and in New York.

Soilbourne Wheat Mosaic Virus, March, 2008

For now locally, our control options are limited. Sanitation between fields is important since the pathogen can be transmitted from field to field on dirty equipment. Other management options are unlikely to be helpful.



Efforts will continue over the next couple of weeks by university researchers, Extension staff and crop consultants to determine the extent of the problem. If you are experiencing these types of symptoms in your wheat crop, feel free to contact my office for additional information and to provide us with a location of the affected fields.

Sources:

Dr. Dick Smiley, Columbia Basin Ag Research Center

Dr. Tim Murray, WSU Department of Pathology

SBWM virus Spofford area, Umatilla County

For additional information contact:

Mary Corp, OSU Extension Agent

OSU Extension Service

PO Box 100 Umatilla Hall

Pendleton, OR 97801

541-278-5403 Mary.corp@oregonstate.edu

www.cerealcentral.com