

Ingenious Ideas

Program May Improve Control Of Harmful Pest

(NAPSA)—Growers may be able to better protect next season's corn crop, thanks to a recent monitoring program for corn rootworms.

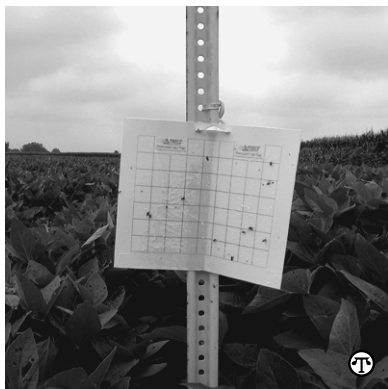
Monsanto distributed 28,000 Pherocon AM sticky traps that can help monitor rootworm presence to growers in parts of five Central Corn Belt states: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Missouri. First sighted in east-central Illinois in the early 1990s, the western corn rootworm variant has continued to spread throughout the Midwest in recent years.

Growers who took part in the monitoring program, covering more than 10 million acres, were asked to place the sticky traps in their soybean fields to determine whether the rootworm beetles were present and at what level. The beetles are drawn to the sticky traps by their yellow color and are then caught on a sticky surface.

This corn rootworm has adapted its reproductive practices by laying its eggs in soybean fields in order to survive field rotations between corn and soybeans. The variant eggs hatch during the spring, after the field has been rotated back to corn, resulting in larval feeding in first-year corn.

"Results from this grower data show that the western corn rootworm beetle was trapped in almost all counties where the sticky traps were sent," said Dave Rhylander, director of traits for Monsanto. "This would suggest that the rootworm variant may be continuing to expand, which could result in greater rootworm pressure when soybean fields are rotated back to corn in 2006."

The goal of the program is to



Sticky traps can help monitor the presence of corn rootworm variants in soybean fields.

raise grower awareness of the expanding problem so that producers in high-risk areas can consider ways to protect their first-year corn next season. Growers should:

- Inspect their corn fields this year and look for the presence of corn rootworm beetles. Look for lodged plants or dig corn plants and inspect the roots for feeding.

- Continue to monitor the movement of the rootworm variant in their area. Talk to other growers, local extension entomologists, retailers and seed dealers, to see if other farmers have reported lodged corn or rootworm feeding.

- Consider using technology that will control rootworm in first-year corn, such as YieldGard® Plus, which delivers whole-season, in-plant protection against European and southwestern corn borers and effective and consistent protection against western and northern corn rootworms.

- Monitor soybean fields in 2006 by using sticky traps.