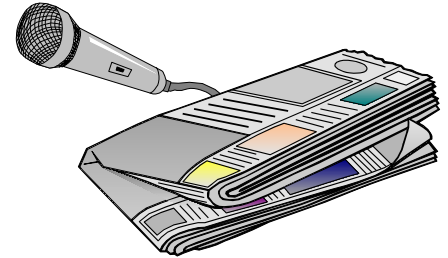*Agriculture   Home Economics   4-H*

GLENN COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION NEWS FLASH

March 19, 2003

Extension Notes - Doug Munier, Farm Advisor

An Early Start for Wheat Stripe Rust in 2003

According to Lee Jackson, UC Davis Cereals Specialist, wheat stripe rust got a very early start this season in California and now is severe and widespread. At least one new race is present this year, so some varieties previously resistant are showing symptoms. There are a few effective fungicide options for control.

Fortunately says Doug Munier, Glenn County Field Crops Farm Advisor, the northern Sacramento Valley has seen much less wheat strip rust during the past few years than other areas of California. With current wheat prices, most growers will probably choose to take their chances without applying a fungicide.

However, since we are early in the growing season some growers may consider using a fungicide which may be economical considering the current weather pattern and amount of time left for grain-fill. This would only be true if we get the more severe infection of wheat stripe rust they have been seeing in other parts of the state.

The two better fungicide options are Tilt and Quadris. Tilt must be applied no later than full flag leaf emergence. It cannot be applied to forage wheat. Quadris can be applied up to late head emergence. The Quadris label does not address wheat for silage, but says it can be used on wheat for hay (defined as dried to 20% moisture before being fed). A Syngenta (the manufacturer of Quadris) representative said Syngenta hadn't considered the practice of green-chop that is common in California. They may try to add that use to the label in the future. For now, only use Quadris on forage if the forage is to be dried to 20% before being fed.

If a grower sees wheat stripe rust developing in a field and is considering spraying a fungicide please call Doug Munier, Field Crops Farm Advisor, at 865-1107. He can help in disease identification and help determine how effective the fungicide application was for the stripe rust infection.