

News Releases/ Media Relations

NEWS

Compiled By Greg Lamp

Soybean Rust Overwinters In Florida

A sian soybean rust has now been found on overwintering kudzu foliage in Dade City, Pasco County, FL. The identification was made Feb. 23 by the Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Science. This is the most southerly find so far in that state. ■

\$900,000 GRANT FOR SCN STUDY

Iowa State University (ISU) has just been awarded a \$900,000 grant to investigate the process by which soybean cyst nematodes (SCN) infect soybeans.

SCN causes an estimated \$700 million in annual losses to the U.S. soybean industry and often is called the most serious disease problem in soybean production.

The research will take the approach of unraveling the molecular mechanisms underlying SCN parasitism and then interfere with these mechanisms, says Thomas Baum, plant pathologist at ISU. USDA's National Research Initiative grant is for three years.

BRAZIL CUTS CROP ESTIMATE

The Brazilian marketing consultant Safras & Mercada has cut its estimate of Brazil's 2005 soybean crop to 61.16 million metric tons (MMT) from a previous forecast of 63.57 MMT, made on Dec. 10. The new forecast still represents an increase of 23% over the firm's 2004 production figure.

TURN ETHANOL INTO HYDROGEN

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) has introduced legislation to help turn ethanol into hydrogen for use as fuel in hybrid electric vehicles. Harkin's bill authorizes \$5 million over three years to demonstrate the cost-effective production of hydrogen from ethanol and other farm-based fuels.

Renewable Fuels Association President Bob Dinneen says: "We

believe ethanol can play an important role in fueling the future hydrogen economy."

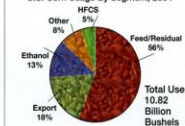
EDEN'S PROACT RECEIVES APPROVAL

Eden Bioscience, which develops, manufactures and markets natural protein-based products for improving crop production and plant health, has just received registration from EPA for ProAct. ProAct is a new generation of foliar-applied harpin protein designed to increase row-crop yields in corn, cotton and rice.

The company plans to register ProAct in all states except California for use during the 2005 season.

Corn Consumption

U.S. Corn Usage By Segment, 2004



SOURCE: USDA, ERS FEED OUTLOOK, JAN. 05

WIND THROUGH CROP INSURANCE MAZE

If you're confused about your crop insurance options, USDA's Risk Management Agency has created a Web page that can help. The Web page has links to agent locators, descriptions of available policies, and tools and calculators to help you make decisions about coverage. Visit the crop insurance toolbox at www.rma.usda.gov.

FARM EQUIPMENT EXPORTS JUMP

U.S. exports of ag-related machinery totaled almost \$5.7 billion in 2004, an increase of close to 19% compared to the previous year. All major world regions recorded gains, led by exports to Australia (up 64% to \$673 million) and South America (up 43% to \$401.5 million), according to the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

The 2004 double-digit improvement is the third consecutive year of growth for U.S. farm equipment exports, following a 9% gain for 2003 (\$4.8 billion) and a 6% gain for 2002 (\$4.4 billion). Exports in 2001 totaled \$4.2, and \$4.5 billion in 2000.

AG EXPORT FORECAST UP \$3 BILLION

USDA has raised the fiscal year 2005 forecast of ag exports from \$56 billion to \$59 billion. This would make fiscal year 2005 the third highest export sales year ever following fiscal year 2004 at \$62.3 billion and fiscal year 1996 at \$59.8 billion.

Canada will remain the No. 1 market for U.S. ag products at a projected \$10.2 billion, while Mexico at \$8.5 billion is expected to surpass Japan (\$7.7 billion) for the first time. Export sales to the European Union are projected at \$7 billion and China at \$4.6 billion, account for the top five markets.

MONSANTO PURCHASES NC+ SEEDS

NC+ Hybrids announced that it has been acquired by American Seeds, Inc., a holding company formed by Monsanto Company in the fall of 2004.

NC+ Hybrids, based in Lincoln, NE, will be a distinct operating subsidiary and run as an independent brand. ■

Farm Income To Drop 12.5%

USDA's first forecast of 2005 farm income pegs net income at \$64.4 billion, down \$9.2 billion or 12.5% from the record \$73.6 billion estimated for 2004. The forecast was higher than many financial analysts had expected, according to Richard Brock, *The Brock Report*.

At the forecast level, annual farm income would still be the second highest on record. Forecast income for 2005 suffers in comparison to 2004, mainly because of the abnormally large \$14.4 billion surge in income generated by exceptionally favorable market and/or crop conditions last year, Brock says. ■



1776/2006 "A Critical Year"

