

Stripe rust forecast 'low,' but that could change

Warm weather, snow cover help fungus survive

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

The first stripe rust forecast of 2018 for Pacific Northwest wheat is for a low risk of infection, but a researcher warns that could easily change.

The forecast indicates stripe rust will likely be in the "low epidemic level" range, with 0 to 20 percent yield loss, said Xianming Chen, plant pathologist at the USDA Agricultural Research Service in Pullman, Wash. Highly susceptible winter wheat varieties would likely have 6 percent yield loss and other varieties would have less than 3 percent yield loss, he said.

If Chen's forecast stands, he said, early fungicide application at the time of herbicide application would not be

necessary. The forecast is based on November and December temperatures, Chen said.

However, forecasts can drastically change, he warned.

The latest prediction is similar to the forecast he issued at the same time last year, but a second forecast in 2017 was far different from the first.

"Last year, the rust was very severe," Chen said.

His next prediction will be based on the entire winter. Winter weather determines how much rust survives, Chen said. The disease is more likely to survive with a good snow cover.

"This year, so far, there's not very much snow cover," he said.

The temperature also determines rust survival. Rust does not survive temperatures below 5 degrees.

The picture will be clearer in March, when he issues his updated forecast, he said.

Don Drader, agronomy service representative for Syngenta in Moses Lake, Wash., advised farmers to follow rust reports from Chen and from Oregon State University.

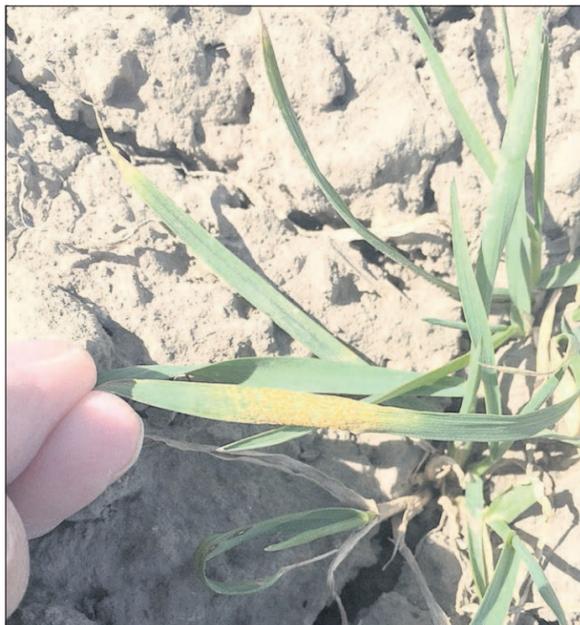
They should also start scouting their fields now, he said. Rust spores can be viable during warmer periods. He recommends farmers check the draws, areas that get a little more humidity and look for foreign inoculants.

"The more frequently they can check them, the better off," he said.

Growers also need to grow wheat varieties with rust resistance, he said.

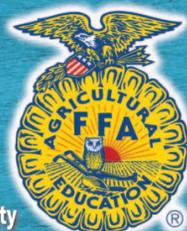
Little stripe rust is predicted so far this year, but that could change, a USDA researcher says. He recommends that farmers monitor their fields and keep an eye on the weather to gauge whether the rust outlook will change.

University of Idaho



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Idaho FFA Members Shine at National FFA Convention and Expo

Boise, Idaho — Over 600 Idaho FFA members, advisors and supporters traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana, in October for the 90th National FFA Convention and Expo.

Members participated in Career Development Events, Leadership Development Events, workshops, community service and participated in sessions where they heard from the national FFA officers and motivational speakers including Laila Ali, four-time undefeated boxing world champion and daughter of the late Muhammad Ali. Five Idaho FFA members served as delegates to the convention.

Rigby FFA member, Margaret Mackin, was awarded first place nationally in the Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management Proficiency. Nate Connell of Fruitland FFA placed first individual nationally in the Milk Quality and Products Career Development Event, and Dalton Johnson of Rigby FFA was the second highest placing individual in the Environmental and Natural Resources Career Development Event.

In addition to these outstanding individual placings, the following chapters received the highest honor of a gold ranking in the following events:

- Rigby: Environmental and Natural Resources CDE.
- Kuna: Parliamentary Procedure Leadership Development Event.
- Fruitland: Milk Quality and Products CDE and Agronomy CDE.
- Cambridge: Floriculture CDE.
- Meridian: Veterinary Science CDE and Food Science and Technology CDE.
- Nampa: Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems CDE.

In addition, 12 Idaho FFA members or chapters placed in the silver ranking and five earned bronze.

The American Falls FFA Chapter was named a Premier Chapter and was a finalist for the Model of Excellence award for its "The Fast and the Farmers" project that aimed at strengthening agriculture. Through the National Chapter Award Program, American Falls is recognized one of the top 10 chapters in the nation. Marc Beitia, American Falls FFA advisor, says, "It was an honor for our chapter from a rural community in Idaho to be considered as a national Model of Excellence. Our work in growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture serves as a foundation for American Falls FFA as we strive to produce tomorrow's leaders while serving our agricultural community. It was also rewarding to be recognized as a Premier Chapter for our efforts with the JR Simplot Company as we work side-by-side during the annual Simplot Games to increase the agricultural literacy of the athletes from across the country and around the world."

Along with American Falls, Rigby FFA also earned the Three Star chapter honor at the convention. Bonners Ferry, Homedale, Kuna and Vallivue FFA Chapters received a national Two Star ranking, and Meridian FFA received a One Star ranking.

Gretchen Hansten of Jerome FFA represented Idaho as its national FFA officer candidate. Gretchen did an outstanding job making it into the final stage of the selection process.

Idaho was represented in three divisions of the Agriscience Fair with a Bronze Ranking for the projects from Highland-Craigmont and Council FFA chapters.

Three Idahoans received the coveted Honorary American degree, recognizing their efforts to make a difference in the lives of students through FFA and agricultural education on the national level. These are Rita Ball of Kuna, Jodie Mink, Cambridge FFA Advisor and agriculture and natural resources instructor, and Rev. Cathi Braasch, mother of the late Sarah Braasch Schmit, who accepted the honorary degree on behalf of her daughter.

Fifty Idaho FFA members received the American FFA Degree, the highest degree available to any FFA member.

Idaho FFA is proud of its 4,708 members in 95 chapters throughout the state. Idaho FFA members competing at the national level were supported by companies' generous support through the Idaho FFA Foundation and local program sponsors who value agricultural and natural resources education and FFA.



Left to right, Austen Thomason, Idaho FFA Treasurer, Weiser FFA; Rev. Cathi Braasch receiving the late Sara Braasch Schmidt's Honorary American FFA Degree; Lindsey Stowell, Idaho FFA President, Vallivue FFA; Randy Clements, Idaho FFA Vice President, Dubois FFA



Margaret Mackin of Rigby FFA receives her National FFA Proficiency Award. Left to right are Victoria Harris, National FFA Secretary; Margaret Mackin; and Rigby FFA Advisors Robert Hale, Lex Godfrey, and Holly Fullmer.



American Falls FFA receiving the Premier Chapter Award at the National FFA Convention and Expo. In front are Aliyanna Broncho and Ruben Gutierrez. In back is Daniel Heikkila, American Falls FFA Advisor.



Gretchen Hansten, Jerome FFA, 2017 Idaho FFA National FFA Officer Candidate.



Nathan Connell, Fruitland FFA, first place individual in the Milk Quality and Products Career Development Event.

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