

Midwest Farmowner

News & Information from Soy Capital Ag Services

Palmer Amaranth Threatens Crop Production Profitability

Palmer amaranth, a prolific member of the pigweed family, could threaten more crop production acres in the Midwest as it continues to spread. Soy Capital Ag Services farm managers are monitoring the weed, and will work with farmowners to keep its proliferation at bay.

“One of the advantages of working with Soy Capital is that we have farm managers that cover a broad area, so we can see things like Palmer amaranth coming and can educate others about what to watch for and how to treat it,” says John Tammen, farm manager in Kankakee.

“Palmer amaranth has been described as ‘super waterhemp.’ It is more invasive and has a higher growth rate than waterhemp,” adds Tyler Roth, farm manager in the Decatur, Ill., office. “We are aware of the problems it creates, and will have a plan in place as it spreads.”

Tammen already has had some experience with Palmer amaranth near Rensselaer, Ind. Once identified in 2013 and controlled through physical removal and herbicide use, no recurring problems were found in 2014.

“One of the vivid descriptions of Palmer is that its flower length can be measured in feet, while other weed flowers are measured in inches. One Palmer amaranth plant can produce up to 500,000 seeds that are each the size of the period at the end of this sentence,” says Tammen.

University of Illinois Extension agronomist Robert Bellm, who is based in southern Illinois where Palmer amaranth also has been confirmed, says the number of seeds is not the only challenge. Palmer amaranth can emerge from mid-May into August and can grow up to 2.5 inches per day. Pollen can travel half a mile and is viable for 120 hours after it is shed.

On the plus side, Bellm says Palmer amaranth seeds are short-lived in the soil and do not emerge from lower soil depths. However, buried seed can survive 10-15 years in the soil, so farmers that plow those fields more than once could bring those buried seeds to the surface.

“The goal is to keep the weed from germinating at all. Prevention is better than eradication,” says Roth. “Scouting should begin two to three weeks after crop emergence. Palmer amaranth is not controlled well once the weed is taller than four inches.”



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Bellm says control must be 100 percent to be successful. A full rate of a preplant residual herbicide should be used in soybeans. Herbicide costs can double once the weed is present.

Tammen says in areas where Palmer amaranth has been confirmed or suspected, farm managers may recommend a preventative herbicide treatment in soybeans in 2015.

“Farmers should watch for the weed during harvest since it easily spreads through combine use. Be aware of what it looks like and how it differs from waterhemp. Stop the combine if you see it. Cut the weed down and bag it so it does not scatter seed,” says Tammen.

Tammen adds that Soy Capital farm managers will discuss Palmer amaranth during winter crop planning meetings. Farm managers also will attend weed seminars and share information with farmowners and tenants to help prevent Palmer amaranth infestation in 2015. **MF**

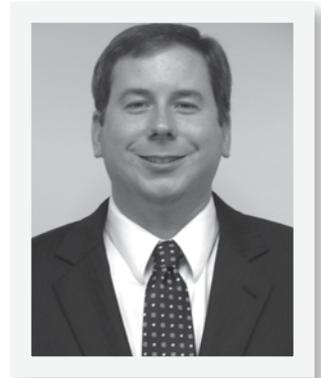
Inside: Soy Capital 2014 Test Plot Results Become Available

Two Soy Capital Farm Managers Earn Accredited Status

Two Soy Capital Ag Services farm managers added the AFM designation to their credentials this summer. Mark Smith located in the Bloomington office and Jaret Wicker based in the Kankakee office passed the Accredited Farm Manager (AFM) exam. AFM status is awarded by the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

“The AFM designation is awarded to individuals who have proven their proficiency in the farm management industry. Proficiency is gained through required years of experience, the completion of four education courses designed and presented by seasoned industry leaders, and a rigorous two-day exam. The course curriculum helps enhance our professional skills, which include the development of well-rounded thought processes, strategies and ideas,” says Smith, who graduated from the University of Illinois in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree in crop sciences, concentrating in crop agribusiness. He also is a licensed real estate broker.

Smith grew up on his family’s grain production farm in rural LaSalle County, Ill., where he earned his American FFA Degree and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. He is a member of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers and the American Society of Agronomy. Smith participated in the Illinois Soybean Association’s Soy Ambassador Leadership Program, where he gained domestic and international exposure to the U.S. soybean industry. He manages farms in Illinois, Iowa and South Dakota.



Mark Smith



Jaret Wicker

Wicker is a 2007 Purdue University graduate with a degree in agricultural systems management and minors in agribusiness management and animal science. He joined Soy Capital Ag Services following employment in agricultural banking with Wells Fargo. He is a member of the American and Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Wicker manages farms in Illinois and Indiana and is a licensed real estate broker in both states.

“The designation provides clients and prospective clients with the comfort of knowing their farm manager will provide the highest level of service to meet farm goals and optimize return on assets,” says Wicker. “The accreditation process enhances skills necessary to profitably and sustainably maintain and improve investments. Through continuing education, I will be able to guide clients through complex issues in the modern agriculture environment.”

For more information, contact Jaret Wicker at jwicker@soybank.com or 815-936-8978, or Mark Smith at msmith@soybank.com or 309-665-0053. **MF**

ISU Graduate Ross Perkins Joins Bloomington Office



Ross Perkins

Ross Perkins has been named assistant vice president, farm manager and real estate associate in Soy Capital Ag Service’s Bloomington office. Perkins, from Gibson City, Ill., is a 2014 graduate of Illinois State University with a degree in ag business.

“I appreciate that Soy Capital takes a team approach to farm management and performs research to stay on top of production issues,” he says. “I look forward to helping clients have positive experiences maximizing farm profitability and assisting with any real estate needs.”

During his last year in college, Perkins helped the Leonard Family Partnership in Gibson City, getting hands-on experience with a commercial farming operation. The three previous summers, he worked with Monsanto in Farmer City, Ill., assisting in overseeing seed production fields throughout the detasseling process, coordinating machinery and hand crews to ensure timely corn tassel cutting and pulling. Since joining Soy Capital, Perkins has attained his Illinois real estate broker’s license and attended the Agricultural Land Management 1 Class offered by the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

Ross Perkins can be reached at rperkins@soybank.com or 309-665-0059. **MF**

New 2014 Research Data from Soy Capital Available Online

Soy Capital Ag Services has partnered with the seed industry for many years to test some of the latest seed technologies and genetics on the market. The 2014 test plots were no different. Soy Capital included seed performance evaluations for corn-on-corn crop rotations, conventional soybeans, Liberty Link soybeans, and blended refuge corn treatments.

“We tailor our plots toward the latest challenges facing agriculture and the advances in the seed industry that address them,” says Ross Albert, who coordinates the test plots for Soy Capital from the Bloomington, Ill., office. “One of the more recent challenges we are researching is managing weeds and insects that have developed a resistance to current technologies. Our plots help us determine the best management practices going forward.”

Albert says the 2014 harvest has offered an exciting opportunity to see how products perform during a very favorable growing season.

“We are seeing tremendous yields as we harvest our plots,” he says. “This year’s findings, combined with past research results, will help us stay at the forefront of agronomic research as seed products evolve, and help us work with clients to maximize profitability.”

As individual 2014 plot results become available, Albert notes the results will be posted at www.soycapitalag.com. A summary of all of the plot results will be published during late November in both the *Illinois* and *Indiana Agrinews* publications.

“The application of ideas and results from agronomic research has always been an attribute of American agriculture. Soy Capital is vested in managing new challenges from the leading edge of information,” says Albert. “We are already planning plots for the 2015 growing season to address coming issues we see affecting the industry. Our research plots, time in the field, and experience will continue to help us make solid management decisions for clients.”

For more information on Soy Capital’s agronomic research, contact Ross Albert in the Bloomington office at ralbert@soybank.com or 309-665-0958. **MF**



The 2014 Soy Capital plots harvest offered an exciting opportunity for farm managers to see how corn and soybean seed products performed during a very favorable growing season.

Farmowner Appreciates Soy Capital’s Turnkey Sales Service

Julia Faust faced challenges with the sale of her farm near Bement, Ill., but it was nothing Soy Capital Ag Services couldn’t solve. In fact, Faust was pleased Kevin Hilligoss, regional manager for Soy Capital’s Decatur office, took care of the details without her direct involvement.

“Kevin kept me informed throughout the process. Everything went as smooth as glass. He could resolve everything without me being there, and was a pleasure to work with,” she says.

Faust first heard of Soy Capital about two years ago when a cousin had sold a farm in Piatt County with Hilligoss’ help. She decided to make the same call when she was ready to sell.

Faust had sentimental ties to the farm. Her father was born and raised there, and the same tenant family had farmed the acreage across two generations – about 40 years.

“Kevin went out and looked at the property right away. He met with the tenant and kept him in the loop during the sales process,”

says Faust. “I was hoping the tenant could continue to farm it, and Kevin found a buyer that may continue the relationship. That would be wonderful.”

The farm was surveyed after the property was listed. The only entry into the field at the time was through a driveway the family no longer owned. Hilligoss met with officials from the state of Illinois who owned the old rail track bed that bordered the property. He got necessary permissions to add two culverts along the state highway to provide access for equipment. Hilligoss also had considerable help from farm manager Tyler Roth throughout the process.

“I went back and forth with counter offers, but in the end, Kevin did a great job in selling the farm for me. I would recommend Kevin to others looking to sell,” says Faust.

Contact Kevin Hilligoss at khilligoss@soybank.com or 217-421-9618. **MF**



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- Farm Sale by Soy Capital is Wonderful Experience for Landowner
- Soy Capital Farm Managers add New Professional Accreditations

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