



Pest e-alerts



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Foliar disease control critical for Spanish peanuts

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Contract prices for Spanish peanuts are up this year, resulting in more producers planting varieties such as Tamnut OL06 and Tamspan 90. Spanish peanuts are well adapted to Oklahoma because they require less water, mature earlier, and have better resistance to Sclerotinia blight than runner varieties. As a result, they can be produced more economically than runner varieties. However, one drawback of Spanish peanuts is their susceptibility to foliar diseases. Generally, leaf spot develops earlier on Spanish varieties when planted side by side with runners. Leaf spot normally reduces yield as a result of defoliation late in the season. Late-season defoliation weakens pegs and causes pod loss during digging. Spanish varieties are so susceptible to leaf spot that defoliation can develop by mid-season. Leaf drop around the base of the main stem appears to reduce subsequent flowering and pod set on this part of the plant. Because the majority of peanuts on Spanish varieties are set on the main stem, these lower leaves should be kept healthy until the crop is set. Conversely, runners do not flower on the main stem, but rather set their pods on the lateral branches.



Leaf spot control is important in the production of all peanut varieties but is particularly critical in the production of Spanish varieties. While weather and cropping history affect when leaf spot develops each year, fungicide programs should be started earlier in the season on Spanish varieties compared to runners. In fields where peanuts were cropped the previous year, consider starting fungicide programs in early July. The first spray in rotated fields can usually be safely delayed until mid July. Use the early leaf spot advisory (<http://agweather.mesonet.org/>) or a calendar (14-day) schedule through August to maintain good disease control. Spanish varieties generally require one or two more sprays per season compared to runners to maintain good disease control.

Weather conditions thus far in June have been moderately favorable for leaf spot and it has rained in many parts of the state as I am writing this article. The following infection hours have accumulated as of 10 June:

Location	Days w/ infection hours	Total infection hours since 1 June
Erick	4	14.3
Ft. Cobb	3	10.6
Tipton	4	6.7

It takes 36 infection hours before spots appear.

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