

Providing Leadership in Environmental Entomology

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GRASSHOPPER DAMAGE ON WHEAT

Description: Grasshopper damage on wheat is often first noticed when a few heads in the field turn white. Several other pests, as well as cold injury can cause this symptom. To verify grasshopper damage, look for ragged feeding damage on the stem. The stem may have a shredded appearance at the feeding site. Grasshoppers also feed on wheat leaves and the ripening kernels, in which case the cause of damage is obvious.



Grasshopper feeding on wheat head
(J. Chapin)



Wheat stem shredded by grasshopper feeding
(J. Chapin)

Management: Wheat stem feeding by grasshoppers has not been an economic problem in South Carolina. It gets noticed because the relatively few stems which are damaged have white heads that stand out in an otherwise healthy green field. Defoliation and head feeding injury is so sporadic that we don't have any well-defined economic thresholds for treatment. See the most recent issue of the Ag. Chemical Handbook for grasshopper control recommendations.

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