February 15, 2017

Dear Growers,

Thanks to the efforts of our participating farmers, our team deployed 41 pheromone-baited leek moth traps to better understand the distribution and timing of leek moth throughout Vermont. Of the 11 counties we sampled in (Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington and Windsor), Windsor was the only county where we didn't find moths.

While the severity of leek moth infestations varied among farms and regions, we can safely say that the pest is steadily advancing southward and eastward. In fact, last summer the moth was positively identified in New Hampshire for the first time. Though the moths may already be established statewide in Vermont, we have yet to see positive identifications in Bennington, Essex, Windham and Windsor counties.

Upcoming Monitoring Season

In preparation for the upcoming season, we are again reaching out to growers throughout the state who are interested in hosting traps. We are encouraging participating growers from last year, as well as new farm-partners, to contribute to our state-wide monitoring for this coming season. We are planning to include at least one participating farm in each county to be monitored directly by our team. We will provide all of the monitoring supplies as well as consistent scouting visits to help best manage leek moth and track their movement. Monitoring sites will be strategically selected to provide the best regional coverage.

Image of leek moth on trap card (circled). Notice the characteristic white triangle on the wings.

Finally, we will also be sending out electronic surveys to gauge current knowledge of the pest and to solicit suggestions for research going forward.

Field Trials

In addition to our monitoring efforts this coming season, we will also be performing two field trials for leek moth management:

1) an onion varietal trial to identify resistant or less preferred onion cultivars
2) a field test of foliar nematode sprays to protect leeks from leek moth damage

Results from these studies and other management tactics will be shared at an upcoming summer field day at UVM's Horticultural Research and Education Center, as well as disseminated through a variety of other outlets.

For more information regarding the upcoming monitoring and field trials, this summer's field day or any information about our research catch up with us at the NOFA-VT Winter Conference or contact us at any time.

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