

FY16 USWBSI PROJECT ABSTRACT

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PROJECT 1 ABSTRACT

(1 Page Limit)

In spring 2014, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducted a survey commissioned by the USWBSI of wheat and barley producers in 17 states. The survey covered growers' perceptions of scab as a problem, their scab management practices, and their scab information sources. Preliminary analysis of the results indicates both gaps in adoption of scab management practices and regional/state differences with respect to which barriers to adoption are seen as most important. Both things suggest that there is much the Initiative could do, working in a targeted manner, to enhance adoption of best management practices (BMP) for scab.

*Use of moderately resistant cultivars: In each of six market classes, the varieties that growers reported as their top varieties were assigned a scab rating of MR, MS, S, or UNKNOWN, based on all available data. Of the acreage reported by respondents that was planted to identifiable and scab-rated varieties, the percentages of MR acreage were: 9% for barley, 31% for durum, 51% for hard red spring, 15% for hard red winter, 31% for soft red winter, and 47% for soft white winter. In each case, the remainder of the identifiable, scab-rated acreage was in MS or S varieties. However, in several market classes the percentage of MR acres is undoubtedly less, as is explained.

* Use of effective fungicides: Many respondents indicated they used strobilurins or triazole-strobilurin mixes for scab management.

* Barriers to adoption of scab management practices: Four barriers that were experienced to varying degrees are potentially areas in which the Initiative can take action. Of these, the most widely selected by respondents across states was the difficulty in determining flowering dates in order to apply fungicides at the right time; a full 10.3% of respondents indicated that was a problem. The other three barriers that could be most readily addressed are: information on scab resistance of varieties is not available or timely (8.4%); seed of scab-resistant varieties is hard to obtain (5.9%); information about scab risk is hard to get in a timely way (6.3%).

Although the survey is not yet fully analyzed, results already highlight certain areas where effort to increase BMP use should be focused. It is proposed that the Executive Committee convene a USWBSI Task Force to Increase Scab BMP Adoption. The task force should consist of MGMT Committee members, grain purchasers, growers, small-grain commodity representatives, and agricultural communications professionals. The EC should charge the task force to develop initiatives related to each of the opportunities identified by the survey. Potential initiatives are sketched.