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### ***Time for Greenup***

As I write this, temperatures are below freezing with snow on the ground. By the time you *read* it, daytime highs may have a six in front of them. Thus is typical of spring in Kansas, and also means our cool season grass species (brome/fescue) will be headed for green-up sooner than later. It also means an opportunity to evaluate armyworm damage from last fall.

Evaluation can be done in various ways. A quick and simple way is to walk fields looking for differences in dormant canopy cover. You'll likely see relatively quickly where stands recovered in the fall because they'll have some level of dormant foliage covering the soil surface. If you drag your foot along the ground, any canopy cover in the heavily fed on areas will likely be dislodged, revealing bare ground surfaces.

As telling as the aforementioned evaluation may be, you can learn even more by digging up some plants as you walk fields. Dig some in a good area as a reference, then compare it to other areas throughout the field. You will likely see differences in below ground moisture and root mass. While difficult to say with any certainty without magnification if roots are alive or not, you *can* look for new shoot growth at the base of crowns. Some stands aren't showing anything at all just yet, but others have begun to show below ground shoot growth, meaning plants still have the potential for some level of recovery.

If plants didn't go in to dormancy with good root energy reserves because of feeding injury, recovery will likely be slowed to a degree. A quick observation of stand cores we're growing out right now in the office would suggest damaged areas are in some cases 7-10 days behind undamaged areas when it comes to the green-up process. Patience is going to be key this growing season if we're going to try to allow stands to recover before making a replant decision.

### ***Flower Beds Weed Prevention***

For some folks, weeding flower beds is therapeutic. In annual flower beds, a good mulch job combined with some hoeing or hand weeding can generally keep weeds down until the plants canopy and prevent further weed germination. Even so, sometimes even that 'little' time needed may be too much. That's when a pre-emergence herbicide can help.

The term 'pre-emergence' is a little bit of a misnomer. They don't actually keep weed seeds from germinating, instead killing young plants just as they start to grow.

They also can't just sit on the surface. Products should be watered in with at least a quarter inch of water so young roots will come in contact with the herbicide.

Pre-emergence products certainly aren't perfect. One hundred percent control simply isn't attainable, but they can give you a head start on some weeds. They also tend to be much more effective on grassy weeds (think crabgrass) versus broadleaves like dandelions or spurge.

Existing plants will *not* be controlled, meaning products must be applied prior to weed seed germination. They also don't last forever, providing just enough control to get to canopy.

There aren't a lot of products available, but most contain the active ingredients dithiopyr or trifluralin. Look for those active ingredients on the label as well as the ornamental plants you are going to be applying on to make sure they are safe. *Always* read and follow product labels.