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## Fall SCN Testing

Soybean harvest will soon be upon us and hours in the combine staring at a yield monitor can provide us a good opportunity to plan fall Soybean Cyst Nematode (SCN) monitoring efforts. In-cab field observations combined with yield monitor data can help us design that plan.

Sampling for SCN can occur about any time during the year. Fall is a great time, allowing time for potential management changes in advance of the next soybean crop. Drought conditions favor SCN reproduction, making this fall a prime time to monitor SCN levels.

One of the challenges of SCN is its uneven distribution. Nematodes only travel short distances, so testing protocols are fairly intense and designed with the intent of getting a good idea of numbers. Most protocols suggest 10-20-acre sampling blocks or sampling according to field management zones or in areas where you've noted production issues in the past. Focus on fields known to have SCN populations or those planted to soybeans with greater frequency, or with a history of soybean Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS). Walk in a Z pattern and collect 10-20 cores (six to eight inches deep) per sampling zone. Mix well in a bucket and collect one pint of soil in a plastic bag. Seal the bag, and ship overnight (Refrigerate samples if shipping cannot occur immediately. Do not allow samples to remain in the mail over a weekend.).

To aid Kansas producers in monitoring for SCN, the K-State Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab is offering *limited* free SCN testing through a grant from the SCN Coalition. To learn more, contact me via any District Office or email [dhallaue@ksu.edu](mailto:dhallaue@ksu.edu) or check out a KSU Agronomy eUpdate article at [https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article\\_new/free-soybean-cyst-testing-from-the-k-state-plant-disease-diagnostic-lab-497](https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article_new/free-soybean-cyst-testing-from-the-k-state-plant-disease-diagnostic-lab-497) .

## Adding Organic Materials to the Garden

Tired of looking at a garden that hasn't gotten it done this summer? Maybe the only advantage to a hot, dry end to the growing season is we can start adding organic matter to the garden sooner than later. In fact, you might consider adding organic materials directly to the soil, and bypass the compost process altogether.

The materials you can add are (almost) endless. Old mulch or rotted silage? Add it and till it in. When leaves start to fall, you can do the same.

One material many homeowners want to use is collected grass clippings. Most of the time, that will be fine, so long as you avoid any clippings previously sprayed with a crabgrass killer. Spring applied crabgrass *preventers* should be okay, but crabgrass *killers* are not. They can carry over and harm growing plants the following spring.

Spread materials to a depth of three inches and incorporate Shred coarse materials (tree leaves, etc...) so they will break down better. When incorporating, make sure soil is not too wet.

You can repeat this process about every two weeks so long as weather remains warm. As it cools down, the addition interval will need to be lengthened, but you can likely repeat the process until early December.