

INTEGRATED CROP MANAGEMENT

IC-496 (12)

127

May 22, 2006



Insects and Mites

BugCast: A podcast about insects

by Marlin E. Rice, Department of Entomology

Podcast—you may have heard the word, but you don't know what it means. I can assure you that if you have kids in high school or college, they will know. It is relatively new technology that often, but not always, uses the iPod to capture and display either audio or video.

According to *Wikipedia*, the free online encyclopedia, podcasting is a method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio programs or music videos, over the Internet for playback on mobile devices and personal computers. The term podcast, like “radio,” can mean both the content and the method of delivery. The host or author of a podcast is often referred to as a “podcaster.” A podcaster's Web site also may offer direct download or streaming of their files; however, a podcast is distinguished by its ability to be downloaded automatically using software capable of reading RSS or Atom feeds. Podcasting's essence is about creating content (audio or video) for an audience that wants to listen or watch when they want, where they want, and how they want.

On February 18, 2006, the first “BugCast with Marlin Rice” was posted on the Web. This podcast was an interview-style video with Doug Cooper, extension communications producer. Since then, Doug and I, along with Loren Porter and several other talented people in Iowa State University Extension Communications and Marketing, have developed and delivered an additional six BugCasts. More are planned throughout the summer and these will be posted on the Internet about once every week.

So far, we have developed video podcasts on planting dates and Bt rootworm corn, soybean aphid winter survival, scouting for alfalfa weevils, impact of winter weather on insects, northern corn rootworm in soybeans, variant western corn rootworms in Iowa, and multi-colored Asian lady beetles. If you would like to view these podcasts, the procedures on the following page will help you access the files.



iPods capture and display either audio or video so you can listen or watch when you want, where you want, and how you want. (Keven Arrowsmith)

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Accessing the BugCasts

1. Go to <http://www.apple.com/itunes/>.
2. Click on the “Launch Music Store” tab under the blue tab “iPod + iTunes.”
3. A new page, “The Music Store,” will appear. On the left side in the “Inside the Music Store” where it says “Choose Genre,” go down three lines to “Podcasts.” Click on this.
4. A new page will open. Type “BugCast” in the search box shown with the magnifying glass on the right side of the search box.
5. A new page appears showing the title “BugCast with Marlin Rice” and a red “Iowa State University” box. Click on the red box and a list of BugCasts will appear.

The podcasts can be downloaded and viewed on an iPod if you have one, or they can be watched and listened to on your computer.

We believe these BugCasts are the first insect-related podcasts to be posted on the Internet. I remember a line from the movie *Field of Dreams* about building a baseball diamond in the middle of an Iowa corn field—“If you build it, they will come.” Hopefully, this new technology will find a place in communicating relevant information to agronomists, certified crop advisers, and field scouts on insects and their management in Iowa field crops, and that over time, more and more people will become accustomed to using it. If you have suggestions on how future BugCasts could benefit you and your understanding of insects, then please contact me at merice@iastate.edu.

Marlin E. Rice is a professor of entomology with extension and research responsibilities in field and forage crops.



Announcements

Soybean Rust First Detector training

by Brent Pringnitz, Agribusiness Education Program

Asian soybean rust is a topic of great interest among Iowa soybean growers and agribusiness. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Iowa Soybean Association, and Iowa State University have formed the Iowa Soybean Rust Team and have developed a system in Iowa whereby soybean samples that are suspected of possibly being infected with soybean rust can be examined and passed through a sequence of trained personnel to offer Iowa soybean growers rapid and accurate identification of the disease. Trained agronomists are the best qualified to watch for symptoms and signs of rust on a daily basis throughout the growing season across the millions of acres of soybeans in Iowa. So, the Iowa Soybean Rust Team is recruiting individuals in Iowa to serve as “First Detectors” for soybean rust.

A Soybean Rust First Detector training session is being held on Tuesday, June 20, at the Field Extension Education Laboratory (FEEL), approximately 5 miles west of Ames. At this session, attendees will receive details about the statewide detection system and hear the industry and regulatory perspectives on Asian soybean rust as well as training on identifying soybean rust and distinguishing it from other commonly occurring soybean diseases. Three Certified Crop Adviser Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in the Pest Man-



agement category will be earned for participating in the training. Registration is \$20 and can be paid by check or credit card at the door. Preregistration is not required for this program. Check-in on the day of the training begins at 8:30 a.m., and the program runs from 9 a.m. to noon. More information about the training session can be found at the Agribusiness Education Program Web site, www.aep.iastate.edu or by calling (515) 432-9548.

Brent Pringnitz is coordinator of the Agribusiness Education Program.