

## Spider Mites

**OVERVIEW.** Spider mites can be a major corn pest in western regions of the United States. Damage from spider mites may lead to yield or tonnage loss and poor-quality silage with low relative feed value. Managing for mites, starting before planting, can help reduce risk of yield loss in your silage fields.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW.

- Mite infestations remove photosynthates from corn leaves, resulting in loss of leaf tissue, stalk breakage, kernel shrink and premature death. Damaged leaves become yellowish and stippled on the upper surface. Webbing on the undersurface of the leaves causes a grayish color.
- Spider mites spread among fields by climbing to the top of a plant and spinning tiny strands of silk or traveling on dust to new host plants. Female spider mites lay their eggs on the underside of plant leaves.
- Spider mites thrive in hot and dry conditions and are most prevalent under dryland or surface irrigation. A new generation of mites may hatch in as few as 5-7 days in midsummer.

### ACTION STEPS.

- 1. Plan insecticide programs:** Be proactive and determine the insecticide program and spraying schedule before planting. When spraying for spider mites, be sure to use adequate amounts of water for good plant coverage. Follow the guidelines in Table 1.
- 2. Schedule irrigations:** Spider mites do not like moist environments, so use timely irrigations to create humid microenvironments.
- 3. Manage dust on field roads:** Infestations commonly begin in field edges near dirt or gravel roads. Mites travel on dust to new host plants.

Table 1. Insecticide Guidelines

TREATMENT	APPLICATION RATE	HEIGHT OF CORN	NOTES
<b>Comite® miticide</b>	32 to 48 oz. per acre Apply high rates to areas with high mite infestation.	3 - 4 ft.	For ground application: Apply minimum of 20 gallons total volume per acre. Ensure applications are made only when corn leaves are dry.
<b>Oberon® 4SC insecticide/miticide</b>	2.85 to 4.25 oz. per acre Apply high rates to areas with high mite infestation.	3 - 4 ft.	For ground application: Apply minimum of 10 gallons total volume per acre. Maximum Oberon 4 SC allowed per 14-day interval: 4.25 oz. per acre.
<b>Onager® miticide</b> (For Western U.S. Only)	10 to 24 oz. per acre Apply at first sign of mites before populations build up.	3 - 4 ft.	Do not apply more than a total of 24 oz. per acre of formulated product per year.

### 30 SECOND SUMMARY

- To prevent spider mite damage, plan insecticide programs before planting corn.
- Provide timely irrigation to help eliminate a large infestation.
- Manage the edges of fields near dirt or gravel roads that have the potential to pick up more spider mites.

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