



Where do seed, fertilizer and chemical industry personnel and agricultural consultants go every year for hands on training in diagnosing crop problems? To the Southwest Diagnostic Days program held every July at Ridgetown College! July 6&7, 2005 marked the 11th anniversary of this outstanding technology transfer program. Organized by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, the day is designed specifically to hone the problem solving skills of agribusiness representatives through "hands-on" activities related to the correct identification and treatment of crop problems common to southern Ontario. The goal of the Diagnostic Days program is to provide quality training in all aspects of crop production

and management.

The featured crop for 2005 was corn. Corn physiology, corn planting challenges, corn diseases and other production issues were addressed. Other topics discussed included weird and wacky weeds, secondary nutrients, herbicide injury in corn, soybeans, winter wheat and edible beans, spray penetration for fungicides and insecticides, herbicide weaknesses, foliar diseases, transgenics vs. seed treatments, foliar diseases and making the most of wheat. Returning again was the optional horticultural crop stop. The optional Diagnostic Challenge also returned with a chance for participants to test their skills and win prizes.

To facilitate discussion with speakers, participants are broken into small groups of no more than 20 people. Each group rotates through twelve locations, six in the morning and six in the afternoon. 99% of participants rated the day as moderate to highly beneficial to their business. Technology transfer, research and teaching staff from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ridgetown College/University of Guelph, agribusiness and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are involved in presenting the sessions.

"Well done, very informative" - Diagnostic day participant

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Scenes from Southwest Diagnostic Days 2005

