

North Central Soybean Research Program (NCSRP) Benchmarking Survey Will Help Michigan Soybean Producers Identify and Overcome Yield Gaps.

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Project Overview:

Soybean yield increases in Michigan and across the North Central United States have not kept pace with those of crops such as corn, wheat and sugar beets. Producers, researchers and agribusiness agronomists are aware of this situation, however the yield-limiting factors are not fully understood. The most common approach to identifying yield-limiting factors has been through the use of well-designed on-farm and small plot research projects. While the information collected from these projects has increased our understanding, it has not provided enough information.

An alternative or complementary approach for identifying soybean yield-limiting factors has been successfully implemented in Nebraska. The project collected information about yields, crop inputs and management practices for specific fields from producers across the state. They were able to obtain this information from 516 fields between 2010 and 2012 enabling them to identify individual crop inputs and management practices that significantly affect soybean yields. Early planting, starter fertilizer or phosphorus application, judicious use of tillage operations and in some cases, foliar fungicides were identified as opportunities for achieving higher soybean yields in Nebraska.

The Nebraska project was so successful, the North Central Soybean Research Program has provided funding to expand the project and conduct it in states throughout the North Central region. This means that Michigan soybean producers will have the opportunity to supply valuable information about their fields that will lead to specific recommendations for achieving higher soybean yields in the future.

How to participate:

In order to generate meaningful results, we will need to collect field specific information about yields, crop inputs, and management practices from at least 200 soybean fields across the state each year. Participation in the project is voluntary and all information will remain confidential. Producers who want to participate in the project can contact me by phone at 269-673-0370 ext. 2562 or by email at staton@msu.edu. I will provide you with some brief instructions and the survey form. Participating producers should provide as much of the requested information as possible and return completed surveys to me any time before March 15, 2017. Again, your participation is voluntary and all the information you provide will be kept confidential. The information from all the surveys will be used to identify yield-limiting factors and opportunities for increasing soybean yields in Michigan.