

# AGRICULTURAL BEET

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Foresight is 2020

## Cercospora Leafspot Control 2020: A perspective on our perceived reality.

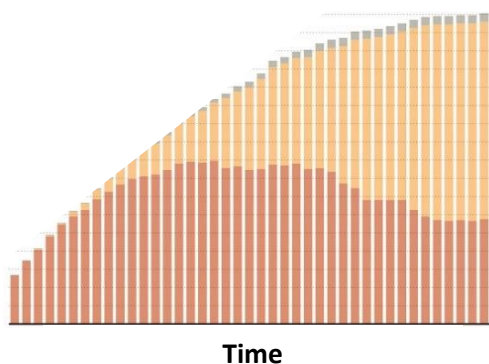
At the 75% mark of our **70-Day CLS Control Challenge** we have successfully kept CLS to relatively low levels. Great Job!! However, there appears to be an increasing number of folks who are convinced that we may be merely enjoying a naturally low disease cycle because of the existence of fields that did not receive proactive care that are generally as clean as those that were treated aggressively.

I would like to provide a few challenges to this premise. My Dad would often mix metaphors. He'd often say that "*Perception is 9/10ths of the law.*" Actually, his version does possess a bit of accuracy because of the human tendency to permit our perception to become our reality. This is why a mindset that has our general lack of CLS in 2020 being through some sort of luck-of-the-draw is disconcerting. If we are unable to recognize your individual impact on the onset of disease in 2020, I fear that we will be less likely to be in a position to enjoy the fruits of our efforts in the future because we risk the potential slip back into a similar routine that has us **playing** "catch-up" **with a disease that doesn't play fair.**

After the 2018 season, a group of shareholders strategized what they might have done differently to manage CLS to economically acceptable levels given a lack of new fungicide tools. Over 80% indicated that if given a chance to face 2018 again, they would start their program earlier. This strategy represents just one example of several adjustments that SMBOSC shareholders made to lessen the infection severity of CLS in 2020. Given all of this effort, it seems disheartening to think that we might be willing to dismiss our success to the roll of a roulette wheel based upon a *perception* that our fortune is related to nothing more than an unknown (and unpredictable) disease cycle.



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Consider what we have observed regarding COVID. Disease levels can appear to be low across an entire community, county, state, or region for an extended period and then **BOOM...**, a single infection left unattended results in an explosion of incidence and frequency. This example is easily transferable to the value of a wholly cooperative effort to invest in preemptive control strategies that are made by *many*, that result in a reduction of "Typhoid Mary" fields and an overall delay and reduction of CLS onset that benefits *all*.

The future will uncover ways to further capitalize on successes with delaying and reducing inoculum buildup. Until then, there is still much that we do not know and efforts to save money prematurely by extending August intervals when infection values can still be high is risky given an **above-average crop.**

Steve Roehl – Ag Strategy Manager