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## Pod and Stem Blight in Soybeans

Pod and Stem Blight is caused by the *Diaporthe-Phomopsis* fungal disease complex, and is found throughout most soybean producing areas of the US. The other diseases are Phomopsis Seed Decay and Stem Canker.

### SYMPTOMS:

- Linear rows of black specks, pycnidia (fruiting structures), on the stem
- Pycnidia only present on dead plant tissue
- Pods may be infected and show scattered pycnidia specks
- Infected seed appears shriveled, cracked and with a white, chalky mold



Linear rows of pycnidia on the stem of an infected soybean plant. Source - Syngenta

### DEVELOPMENT:

- Fungal pathogen overwinters on infected soybean or other crop residue
- Infection can and usually occurs early in the summer from water splashing spores onto the plant
- Symptoms don't develop until plant begin to senesce
- Disease symptoms are favored by warm, humid conditions at plant maturity
- Moisture at senescence plays a role – the plant can be covered with pycnidia in wet years at maturity whereas in dry years, pycnidia are confined to areas of the plant closer to the soil

## MANAGEMENT:

Since the disease overwinters on infected crop residue, tillage and crop rotation will help to reduce the incidence of infection in soybeans. A fungicide application at R3 to R6 can reduce the infection of the seed and improve seed quality, but is generally only recommended for soybean fields grown for seed. Harvesting infected fields earlier will also help to reduce the level of seed infection.

### References

Iowa State University, Integrated Crop Management Article  
University of Missouri, Late Season Soybean Diseases  
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Extension and Outreach

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