

Varietal Information Program for Soybeans (Primary Investigators: Steve Sonka and Pradeep Khanna)

The main objective of the Variety Information Program for Soybeans (VIPS) is to provide a one-stop source of electronic information to assist Illinois soybean producers in their planting decisions. The VIPS presents the most up-to-date and useful technologies for selecting soybean varieties available to soybean producers. Extensive and comprehensive information on varieties grown in the University of Illinois soybean variety trials are available to the soybean industry by November of each year. This includes among other things, information on compositional attributes such as protein and oil content and disease resistance data for the major yield-reducing diseases that threaten soybean production. This information may be valuable to seed companies who want to develop new varieties with specific levels of key attributes. Likewise, processors engaged in strategic planning to improve product quality or establish component-based markets will also benefit from this information. The VIPS also offers a service to registered users to receive email notifications for updates to the VIPS website. By continuing to make this information more accessible to all participants in the soybean marketing channel, the VIPS will contribute to improvement of the soybean marketing system to the benefit of producers.

Research findings generated by the Center will be made available in a timely manner to soybean producers through the VIPS website. Subscribers to the VIPS 'new information updates' service will be notified by email about any new research results generated by the Center.

The recent enhancements to the VIPS make it a more powerful information tool for producers by assimilating a vast, user-friendly database with basic information to assist producers with their variety selection decisions. As a one-stop source for production-related information, VIPS can present soybean producers with a diverse selection of both public and private soybean varieties from numerous sources. The VIPS can also assist producers and buyers in making the transition to soybean marketing based on seed quality attributes. In all, new information on yield, protein, and oil content for about 3,000 varieties from over 80 leading companies grown at 13 trial locations are available annually. By presenting the VIPS concept to agronomists, the growing foundation for technology-based approaches to variety information and selection continues to be implemented. Substantial information on disease resistance is collected during the growing season, and the VIPS users that have requested to be notified about updates will be contacted regarding new research for the Center. University of Illinois pathologists, Professors Glen Hartman and Wayne Pedersen, are currently testing many of the VIPS samples for resistance to aphid infestations, Bean Pod Mottle Virus, Soybean cyst nematode, Sudden death syndrome, Sclerotinia stem rot, Rhizoctonia root rot, and soybean rust. In addition, information on Green Stem for varieties grown at Urbana is currently being noted in field trials. SCN Female Index (FI) data for five HG population types are being collected for nearly all trial varieties. Links to aid the VIPS participants regarding the use of FI data are included. SCN FI data are provided by Professors Terry Niblack and Greg Noel, University of Illinois, and Professor Jason Bond, Southern Illinois University.

All variety trial information generated during the current year's growing season will be available at <http://www.vipsoybeans.org> on December 1 of that same year. All research results generated by the Center will be posted on the VIPS website as reported.