PURPLE BEANS

Friday, October 9, 2026

Getting back into the soybean fields this week has been a welcome relief from the week of waiting for the wet conditions to clear. On the plus side, a lot of yields have exceeded expectations. On the negative side, there are some grain quality issues that are being uncovered.

WHAT WE KNOW



Warm, humid conditions this summer coupled with a delayed harvest after a week of wet weather are causing noticeable change in soybean coloration and in some cases grain quality.

This is not an isolated issue, and it is one that is facing farmers across the Midwest in every corner of every state. Social media is filled with pictures of soybeans of all shapes sizes and colors, and stories of farmers facing dockage or rejection based on damage and color issues.

The largest issues in the field are arising from several fungal pathogens. Purple Seed Stain (PSS) caused by various Cercospora species and Diaporthe Seed Decay (DSD) caused diaporthe/phomposis species complex.

The most common issue in the area that we have seen is related to PSS, which was brought on by the ideal conditions this year for Cercospora even in the absence of the foliar symptoms.

The disease causes a purple stain and often a cracked, rough seed coat to the seeds, which is very distinctive and noticeable in samples.

The good news is that PSS does not cause yield losses, and is mostly a cosmetic issue when it comes to grain milling quality. There are mentions of lower oil content in some write-ups, but we have other studies that show that is not the case.

The stain is almost exclusively isolated to the seed coat, and it has very little impact the coloration of the embryo. (see image below)





PSS does not increase in storage if the soybeans are kept dry and stored properly. Harvest and storage will not be impacted and there is not any reason to be especially concerned about storage.

You'll notice that fields, varieties, and environments have varying levels of the seed stain. Many factors can have an impact on the amount and severity of PSS.

IMPACTS

Marketing these soybeans may be a challenge. While not typically counted as damaged as part of the standard grading process, PSS can cause concerns especially for export markets.

This may cause loads to be docked or in extreme cases rejected, and it may mean that you need to find another outlet for your soybeans.

Local processors or buying locations that supply local crush markets will probably not have any concerns with the soybeans.

Other impacts would be germination and seedling issues if the soybeans are saved for seed, but that is not likely to be an issue in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Harvest these soybeans to get them out of the field and prevent development of more damaging fungal issues like diaporthe/phomopsis seed decay.

Don't just take what is offered. If needed, call around to find a suitable outlet for the soybeans that will provide the highest return when factoring in dockage, transportation, and basis.

If loads are rejected and you cannot find an outlet, this may result in a loss that is covered by crop insurance. You have 72 hours to reach out to your crop insurance provider to get the process started once loads are rejected.

We would recommend that you keep samples from grain that receive dockage or are questioned in case you need to reference the samples later.

On farm storage is an option if needed. PSS will be stable if soybeans are stored properly.

Blending off PSS affected soybeans is also an option that could help market your soybeans, but make sure that you are getting the levels in line with where you need them when blending is complete.

If you have any questions please reach out to the team, and we will take a look at your samples to let you know if there are any concerns not addressed in this message.

Again, the weather was a great setup in 2026 for this Purple Seed Stain to impact soybean acres. We don't expect this to be a problem every year, but it is one that we know is top of mind that we are here to help with.