

Soybean Shatter

Overview

When soybeans are dry and brittle, they can crack open, causing soybeans to fall to the ground instead of being taken up in the combine. This soybean "shatter" can cause losses of approximately 10% in a typical year. During drought, the yield loss can be even higher.

What you should know

- Soybean shatter can lead to yield losses. A loss of just 8-12 seeds per square foot equates to a 2-3 bushel per acre loss. Some farmers estimate that they lose up to \$90/acre due to shatter.
- Shatter becomes worse when pods are weakened due to bean swelling. This can happen when beans mature early without the benefit of late-season rain to fill seeds. The swelling and contracting weakens pods, making them more brittle and prone to shatter.
- Soybean growth is dependent on day length. Shorter, cooler days cause soybeans to mature quickly. Drought causes them to dry quickly.

Action steps

- 1. Harvest beans at the right moisture:** Farmers should harvest beans as soon as they reach 13% moisture.
- 2. Harvest in the right conditions:** Harvest as close to the ground as possible without damaging equipment or taking up debris. Harvest in early morning or following rain when moisture in pods may help prevent shatter.

<https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2014-35/soybean-pod-shattering>
extension.missouri.edu/harrison/documents/Soybean%20Shatter.pdf



Harvesting when pod moisture is higher can help prevent soybean shatter.



30-Second Summary

- Soybean shatter occurs when pods are dry and brittle, causing seeds to fall to the ground.
- Typical shatter losses are around 10%, but can be higher in drought years.
- Harvest at 13% moisture and in the morning or post-rain when pod moisture is higher.

NOTES:

For more information, contact:



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