I hope that you all are staying safe and are able to carry out your farming functions. The Scab Risk Assessment website is not fully functional so far, so I will be emailing the FHB risk assessment commentaries regularly to the small grain community throughout the wheat and barley flowering season of 2020 until the website becomes functional again.

Hopefully, you selected a resistant wheat variety for your planting this year after referring to the University of Maryland’s FHB evaluation of wheat varieties. A good start goes a long way in managing FHB.

Wheat in the Eastern shore of Maryland is either at jointing or booting stage and should be heading out in a week or so. Barley, however, is at heading or will be soon heading in this part of the state. It is important to note that the correct stage for spraying fungicides on wheat is at flowering (when the yellow anthers start to show on the heads), whereas on barley it is at heading (when the heads emerge out of the boots). Even with some intermittent showers, the FHB risk is currently predicted to be low across the state. However, with the rain forecast for this week, the risk may soon escalate. The right fungicides for FHB are Prosaro, Miravis-Ace or Caramba at the right stage of the crop. Fungicides containing strobilurin should not be applied for control of FHB, as in multiple university research trials, strobilurin fungicides have been shown to increase DON levels in grain. On the western side of the shore in Frederick, Harford and nearby counties, wheat plants are starting to joint, and are not at a stage prone for FHB.