VARIETY SELECTION:
THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION
Variety selection is one of the most important decisions a farmer can make for a profitable growing season. Mississippi soybean farmers should select varieties using information from all available sources. Consider using the below sources when selecting varieties for next year:

- Mississippi State University (MSU) variety trials
- Mississippi Soybean Promotion Board (MSPB) Variety Selector tool
- MSU on-farm variety-demonstration outcomes
- Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee soybean variety trials
- Using Multi-state Variety Trial Results on Planting/Agronomy page of www.mssoy.org
With MSPB’s Variety Selector, farmers can access trial data from 2010 to 2014 and select varieties based on yield, agronomic traits, pest resistance, and herbicide resistance. The tool allows farmers to efficiently compare varieties and export the data to a spreadsheet for later use. MSPB partners with MSU to promote the MSU Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station’s Variety Testing Program. These trials test nearly 250 soybean varieties and breeding lines to evaluate their pest resistance, agronomic characteristics, and yield across the state. Try it now at www.mssoy.org/variety-trials.
EIGHT TIPS FOR SELECTING THE BEST VARIETIES FOR YOUR FARM

Below, MSU Extension soybean specialist Trent Irby, Ph.D., and MSU Delta Area Agronomist John Orlowski, Ph.D., share their tips for variety selection:

1. Select varieties capable of performing across a range of environmental conditions.
2. Soil series and subsequent field drainage, row pattern, MG, targeted planting date, and irrigation capabilities are all factors to consider when making variety selection decisions.
3. Evaluate performance in variety trials and on-farm variety demonstration outcomes.
4. Evaluate performance of varieties that you’ve grown on your farm in recent years, and consider planting those varieties that have performed well in the past.
5. New varieties that have good potential based off of limited research may have a fit, but should be planted on limited acreage to evaluate how the new varieties will perform under your specific production system.
6. Talk with your seed dealer about using adapted varieties in fields with a known history of yield and pest presence. For example, a certain seed provider may have a soybean that does very well on clay soils but will not perform as well on sandy or silt loams.
7. Don’t be afraid to try varieties from smaller seed companies. Major seed producers will consistently have top-performing varieties. However, a number of the smaller seed companies have varieties that have had very high yields in a number of tests across the state. Consider giving some of these varieties a try on your farm.
8. Be aware of a field’s history of soil-borne pests such as nematodes, phytophthora root rot, and iron deficiency chlorosis to ensure that a selected variety has tolerance or resistance to these conditions.