

# New Fieldwork Tool Unveiled At MU Crop Conference

**COLUMBIA, MO.**

**A** downloadable spreadsheet helps farmers estimate the probability of completing fieldwork in time based on the capacity of their machinery and the number of acres farmed.

University of Missouri Extension economist Raymond Massey reviewed the Probable Fieldwork Days Model spreadsheet Dec. 19 at the Crop Management Conference, sponsored by the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources.

The free spreadsheet is available for download at [www.crops.missouri.edu/machinery](http://www.crops.missouri.edu/machinery). A link to the spreadsheet file is listed under the heading "Tools."

The tool, developed by the MU Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) and the MU Commercial Agriculture Program, lets farmers estimate how many days it will take to perform fieldwork. Farmers select one of nine crop regions in Missouri, enter the type, size and speed of farm implements being used, the number of acres being planted, and other variables to determine the number of hours needed to plant the crop.

The spreadsheet uses 30 years of historical data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's

National Agricultural Statistics Service.

A guide to using the tool is available for free download at [www.extension.missouri.edu/G363](http://www.extension.missouri.edu/G363).

Massey said Missouri farmers are planting corn crops one day earlier every 2.5 years. "We are planting several weeks earlier than we did 20 years ago," he said.

This may be because corn producers are willing to take a chance on planting before April 5, which is the initial planting cutoff date for Federal Crop Insurance for central Missouri. If corn can reach the "silk" stage sooner, planting earlier may also decrease the probability of heat stress during silking.

Crop producers also may be planting earlier due to factors such as larger machinery, favorable weather, seed coatings, seed genetics, seed company promotions that allow reduced replanting due to frost, and other changes in risk attitude, Massey said.

Massey gave the information in a presentation with MU Extension climatologist Pat Guinan, who said conditions were ideal for planting this past March because of temperatures that were 14 percent above the norm – higher than any March since the 1800s. △



Link Directly To: **AGROTAIN**



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