

# Pioneer Talks Crops

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## **DEXTER, MO.**

This spring has been nearly the total opposite of last year. We have received above average temperatures and a fairly long and early corn-planting window in the upper mid-South. We actually are getting close to the end of corn planting in southeast Missouri and appear to be about two weeks ahead of normal. Some areas have received necessary rainfall to get premerge chemicals activated, while other areas have been dry enough to cause erratic corn emergence due to lack of soil moisture.

It will be necessary to quickly assess stand counts and plant health of the established stand to make replant decisions. We still have a

lot of time, but the quicker a decision is made, the better the chance of achieving optimum yields. Soil insects, seed rots, planter problems, soil compaction and other factors can reduce the number of plants that emerge.

You can check stand counts easily by counting the number of plants in 1/1,000th of an acre then multiply the count by 1,000. Typically, a 75 percent stand is acceptable, with anything less, replant is recommended. It also is important to take into account several factors in replanting such as seed cost, fuel cost, labor costs, machinery costs, etc. However, in early to mid-April in southeast Missouri, it may be wise to consider replanting anything less than an 80

percent stand in a moderate- to high-yield scenario. In late April, we can once again use the 75 percent stand as a guide for making replant decisions.

Soybean planting also has started in many areas, and growers frequently ask what they can do to increase overall soybean yields. To achieve high soybean yields, start with strong fertility. Soybeans need a significant amount of potassium (K). A 60 bushel per acre soybean crop will utilize 320 pounds of nitrogen, 64 pounds of phosphorus, 142 pounds of potassium, 27 pounds of magnesium and 25 pounds of sulfur. Some of this will return to the soil in the stover, but it is important to note that high yields require a lot of good plant food.

When K in the topsoil is deficient, soybean plants will try to obtain needs from the subsoil (only as adult plants). Potassium deficiency first appears as white

speckling of the leaves. Later, interveinal chlorosis will occur near the leaf margins. Finally, chlorosis and necrosis (dead tissue) will be visible along the outer leaf margins. The deficiency symptoms appear on mature leaves first, while young leaves often are symptom-free.

Potassium deficiency may occur when soil K levels are low, when pH is very low, when root restriction occurs or when nematodes are a problem. Test soils to determine the proper amount of fertilizer to apply to achieve high soybean yields.  $\Delta$

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