

Pioneer Talks Crops

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Understand Yield Variability

Corn harvest is almost complete in the upper midsouth and yields vary widely again this year. The upper midsouth experienced a record setting year for heat and drought, while the deep

south had a more mild season.

The extremely variable corn yields coming in have shown little yield in some spots to almost record yields in areas under irrigation. The high degree of field variability will make it difficult to assess hybrid performance across the upper midsouth this year.

Many growers have asked why their corn yields are down so much this year in the upper midsouth. They have also questioned why their favorite corn hybrid has not met their expectations. The short answer is too much stress due to heat and drought.

The more complicated answer involves flower timing and planting date. It appears that even in the worst areas for heat and drought the earliest planted corn is making the best yield. March planted corn had a little better chance of putting an ear on compared to April planted corn. The March planted corn had cooler nights and perhaps a little more soil moisture to provide the opportunity for ear set. Regardless of the planting date dryland corn yields are still way below the 5 and 10 year average for the

area.

Plan for 2013 Hybrid Selections

Each year is unique and this season is no exception. It may be difficult to make hybrid choices for 2013 because 2012 has been so variable and so extraordinarily below normal for average corn yields.

Multiyear and multilocation yield data is the best indicator of future performance. It is important to look at yield data that shows comparisons across several environments in your area and across multiple years. It may be wise to look at yield data outside of your normal growing environment to help make decisions.

Looking at multiyear and multilocation data is the best way to evaluate hybrids in order to predict future performance on your farm. If you make a choice based upon one location in one year then you might be disappointed with your results next year.

Manage a Successful Wheat Crop

Wheat planting is right around the corner. This year several growers have expressed interest in planting more wheat acres. The price of wheat is very high and hopefully the price will offer growers the chance to manage the wheat

for higher yields. High yielding wheat can be achieved by managing fertility, insects, and disease.

Be sure to look at planting good quality treated wheat seed. This will help ensure winter survival. Some other tips to improve yields are to split apply nitrogen, spray for aphids in the fall and spring, apply fungicides for disease, and control weeds early. Hopefully with the right environment we can have a successful wheat crop. Δ

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