

# Pioneer Talks Crops

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**C**orn harvest is well underway in the upper mid-South, and yield results are reflecting southeast Missouri's varied planting times. Initial yield results show corn from early planting (late March to the first few days in April) is yielding significantly

lower than expected. May-planted corn is yielding better, but overall, the crop is highly variable. Growers need to consider information beyond this season to make informed planting decisions in 2012.

Many growers have asked us why their corn yields are down this year, and why their favorite corn hybrid has not met expectations. It has been a difficult year with record rainfall during planting season and excessive heat during the summer. Corn planted in March and early April did not endure the near 30 days of below-average temperature. Typically, corn planted in May doesn't perform as well. This year, there is more May-planted corn than normal. There are other factors that impact yield: sandy fields that lost nitrogen, seedling blight issues accounted for poor stands and poor root development caused further issues.

Each year is unique and this season is no exception. Such variability may make it difficult to

select hybrids for 2012. It is important to look at yield data that shows comparisons across several environments in your area. Multiyear and multilocation yield data are the best indicators of future performance.

Pioneer also recommends looking at hybrid performance data from different states and trials through multiple years. Yield-affecting factors may vary completely next year. If you make choices based upon one location in one year, the risk of disappointment increases. Evaluating hybrids based on a wide range of information is the best way to predict future performance on your farm.

Wheat planting is right around

the corner. This year several growers expressed interest in planting more acres. The price of wheat is high and, hopefully, will offer growers higher yields.

Good management practices such as managing fertility, insects and disease can lead to high yields. Be sure to look at planting high-quality, treated seed to help ensure winter survival. Other tips for improving yields are: split-apply nitrogen, spray for aphids in the fall and spring, apply fungicides for disease and control weeds early. Hopefully, with the right environment, you can have a successful wheat crop.  $\Delta$

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