Wet Fields *Hamper* Planting

NK Seeds Agronomist Offers Advice On Corn Rotation

BETTY VALLE GEGG
MidAmerica Farmer Grower

NORTH CENTRAL MO.

Heavy winter snows and continued early spring precipitation could be challenges for farmers wanting to get in the field. The very wet fields may delay planting or increase disease pressure on seeds and seedlings, according to Randy Kool, area agronomist, NK Seeds.

"If conditions remain moist and cold, some growers may switch out of planned corn acres to soybeans," he said.

In general, corn should be in the ground by mid-May for best results in Missouri, but can be planted until the end of May before it's recommended to switch to soybeans with today's commodity prices. The weather may be a deciding factor in whether or not corn acres change this year.

Kool urges farmers not to be too eager to plant, as proper timing is crucial for both crops.

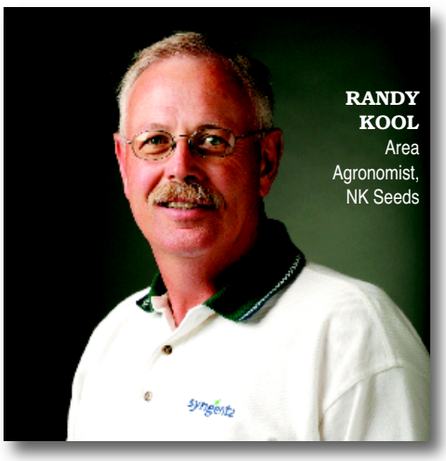
He said growers should consider several factors before planting.

"The main idea is we need to wait until fields are fit to get into," he said. "If it's too wet that can cause compaction issues as well as a cloddy seedbed which would inhibit seed germination and root growth.

"Depending on where you are in the state, most areas are below normal in growing degree units," Kool said. "What that does is delay emergence, it takes longer for the corn to get out of the ground. It takes 120 growing degree units to get corn from planting to emergence."

His advice is to continue with the normal maturity hybrids and seeding rates until the end of May. If switching to an earlier maturity hybrid be sure to increase seeding rates for varieties that produce a fixed or semi-flex type ear. He recommends little change in fertility.

"Most fields have already had nitrogen applied, but because of all the rain we're concerned about leaching," he said. "So you may want to conduct a spring nitrogen test."



All NK seed corn hybrids are treated with Cruiser Extreme seed treatment. This will be beneficial to minimize disease and insect pressure on emerging and early corn plants especially in damp conditions. Δ