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THE SEED CONSULTANT

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

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Several factors that effect emergence

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THANK YOU JOHN

Congratulations to John Wysolmerski for his 18 years of service with Seed Consultants

IMPROVE YIELDS WITH UNIFORM EMERGENCE

By Matt Hutcheson, CCA
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Two aspects of stand establishment in corn often discussed by agronomists are emergence and seed spacing. “Picket fence” spacing in corn allows plants to grow efficiently while minimizing competition between them. More importantly to achieving high yields, however, is uniform emergence. Plants that are just 1 leaf collar behind (due to uneven emergence) significantly reduce yield. According to Paul Jasa, University of Nebraska Extension ag engineer, “When a plant develops ahead of its neighbor, it hurts yield dramatically. It’s going to vary somewhat from year to year, but a plant lagging behind those around it becomes a weed.” Uniform emergence is critical to maximizing yield potential. To achieve uniform emergence, several factors must be taken into consideration.

SOIL MOISTURE

Soil moisture at planting is an important part in ensuring uniform emergence. Seed should be planted into enough moisture to allow for germination. Planting into soils that are too wet will hinder the development of corn plants and cause yield-robbing compaction as well as sidewall compaction of the seed furrow.

SOIL TEMPERATURE

Soil temperature in the mid 50s or higher is required quick and uniform emergence. Soil temperatures below 50° F can result in uneven emergence of corn seedlings. Planting before soils warm up adequately could result in uneven emergence and yield loss.

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>
> **Paul Jasa, University of Nebraska Extension ag engineer**

SEEDING DEPTH

Consistent and uniform seeding depth is an important factor that can help ensure uniform emergence. In general, a seeding depth of 1.5 to 2 inches is the recommended planting depth for corn, depending on soil conditions. Planting shallower than 1.5 inches can result in poor or uneven emergence of corn seedlings. Gauge wheel settings, down pressure, field conditions, residue, and planter speed will all affect seeding depth. Make sure planters are set correctly and equipment is operated at the correct speed. Check seeding depth regularly throughout the planting process to ensure uniformity.

SEED-TO-SOIL CONTACT

For proper germination to occur, corn seed must have adequate contact with soil. Germination with be uneven if planting results in poor seed-to-soil contact: cloddy soil after tillage, seed furrows with residue pinning, open furrows where seed is visible, etc. Proper seed-to-soil contact is crucial to ensuring uniform emergence of corn seedlings. Seed should be placed firmly in the bottom of a furrow that is properly closed to provide seed-to soil-contact.

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SPRING ALFALFA PLANTING

By Jordan Bassler
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Spring is quickly approaching and before we realize it will be time to begin planting our spring alfalfa. The quality of your newly seeded alfalfa stand will have an impact on your farming operation for potentially next 4 years, so starting off on the right foot is very important. The following are a few of my recommendations for starting off your alfalfa stand correctly.

First, plan alfalfa seedings in fields with higher fertility, including pH, potassium, and phosphorus. This is a great reason to begin pulling soil samples if you have not done so already. Having a soil analysis from a lab helps you make correct decisions when planning your spring plantings. We want the pH to be between 6.8 and 7.1. pH levels in this range ensure that nutrients in the soil will be available to the alfalfa seedlings after germination. Potassium should be no less than 170 parts per million, and phosphorus above 30 parts per million. Spring applied fertilizer will have little effect on stand establishment but will certainly help with late summer cuttings.

Second, check previous crop and herbicide records for any herbicide carryover concerns. Alfalfa is highly sensitive to products that contain Atrazine and Acetochlor, for example. If you applied herbicides the previous year which alfalfa is sensitive to, you will have problems with germination and stand establishment. Weather patterns also influence herbicide carryover. Dry winters and springs increase the chance of an issue with herbicide carryover. One more point to consider is the addition of lime. Applying lime will raise the pH of the soil, and could release some previously applied herbicide that was tied up in the soil due to a low pH.

Third, aim for seed depth to be between one-eighth to one-quarter of an inch. This will help stand establishment by getting plants germinated

and out of the soil quicker. The seed will be where there is plenty of moisture, and in the zone that is the quickest to warm up in the spring. Achieving proper seed depth may be difficult with certain tillage systems. When using conventional tillage and drill, this seed depth can be obtained easy. Just remember to firm your seedbed prior to planting. However, in my experience, no-till planting of alfalfa can be difficult due to breaking through old crop residue and not getting the seeds too deep in the soil. If no-till is in your planting strategy, constantly check seed depth settings on the drill, which may require depth settings to be changed frequently. Lastly, do not cut your seeding rates to save some money up front. This will only cost you dollars in the end. Thicker stands of alfalfa have thinner stems at harvest, resulting in higher digestible feed.

Fourth, control your weeds to increase the chance of a successful alfalfa stand. If you have a plan for where you will seed your spring alfalfa, a fall application of glyphosate to clean up your winter annuals can be effective. Fall and/or spring tillage are also viable options as well to start with a clean field free of weeds. Another common practice is to pair alfalfa seedings with oats or other annual crop. This helps to suppress weeds with quick growth from the annual crop and boosts your tonnage later in the summer when you choose to take a first cutting.

Last, try a new variety! Soils change over the years from heavy rains, compaction from traffic running across the field, etc. If you have been using the same variety for a long time, it might be time for a change. Whether it be a different conventional variety or one with the highest digestibility, changing it up could lead to surprising results. Seed Consultants carries a full lineup of alfalfa products. Whether you are looking for a low-cost option for tough soils or the most digestible option available, we have a variety meant for your needs. Be sure you ask your local DSM or dealer for more information on Seed Consultants Alfalfa!

EARLY CASH DISCOUNTS

Seed Consultants offers opportunities to maximize seed cost savings through an early cash discount schedule for the 2021 planting season.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 800-708-2676.

CASH DISCOUNTS

4% .....March

2% ..... April

FUNGICIDE, DID IT PAY IN 2020?

By Bill McDonald, CCA
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Seed Consultants conducted a fungicide study using several of our commercial varieties at three locations this year. This was the first year for this study.

There are never two years in a row that are exactly the same. I'm just not sure what is normal anymore. That is especially true for the results that we saw from our 2020 fungicide study. We got one of the plots planted in a fairly timely manner, the second one still wasn't terribly late but the third one didn't get planted until June 2nd. This wasn't exactly what we wanted, but we figured that at least we'll get totally different results from our fungicide applications with the three different planting dates.

Our Ross County, Chillicothe, location was planted into dry conditions and had a significant amount of rain after planting, 7.76 inches before the spicket dried up, which didn't cause any problems. The issue here was the fact that after the corn got up and going, the rains quit. Naturally, we didn't see much in the way of disease here when we made our V5 application of 6 ounces of Approach® Prima Fungicide. We walked the plots before the application of 6.8 ounces of Approach® Prima at R1 and we noted that some GLS and NCLB was present. There wasn't a high level of either but since this was a study, we went ahead and made the application.

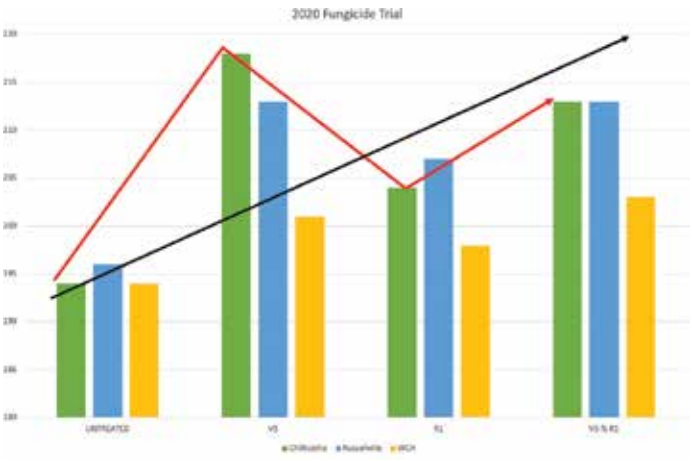
Our WCH plot got planted into the best soil conditions of all three plots but less than one week later it was completely covered with water. The saving grace was that the corn involved in the study was not emerged, and the water got away from that part of the field.

The Russellville plot, planted June 2nd, had a completely different set of problems. Shortly after the R1 application of Approach® Prima, Southern Rust came in. All the varieties weren't affected as much as the SC1018AM™ was, but all showed

These pictures show the difference between untreated and having a fungicide applied at R1 when Southern Rust comes in.

some level of infection. SC1018AM™ is not a variety that is usually planted that far south, and it has less tolerance to Southern Rust than others in the lineup.

The yield outcome that we got was completely unexpected. In a year where there is high disease pressure, one would expect to see a slight increase in the yield with a V5 application, a much larger yield bump from the R1 application and finally an added yield bump when a V5 fb R1 program is used. If you overlook the V5 results that we got this year, our graph would have resembled those expectations, as illustrated by the black line, but that was not the case this year. This year the clear winner was the V5 application. Why is that? One could speculate that it was the plant health effect that strobilurins supply. Did it help the plants that got the V5 application survive the drier than normal conditions in June, July and August better than those that didn't receive it? Was the timing of the V5 application such that it held the GLS off a little longer? One can only speculate.



Looking at this graph one might assume that you could just add a fungicide at V5 into your post spray program and be done but that would most likely be a mistake. The only other time that I've seen results somewhat like this was 2011. As always, you need to scout your fields to see if there is any disease pressure present and pay close attention to your yield potential, variety susceptibility, price of grain as well as current and future weather conditions. Precipitation in the form of rain isn't the only way to create enough moisture for a fungus to spread. Pay attention to the humidity as well.

Trying to figure out the "Why did we get these results?" makes one sit back and scratch his head. Sometimes testing leads to more questions than answers. We are committed to conducting this test again in 2021 and hopefully gain more incite to the benefits of a fungicide application.

John Wysolmerski

THANK YOU JOHN!

John Wysolmerski from Central PA, retired from Seed Consultants Inc. on January 15th after 18 years of service.

John re-entered agriculture, the seed industry, in 1983 after 4 years in the US Army as a Field Artillery officer. He experienced many exciting changes in agriculture over his 37-year career. John previously worked for DeKalb and was hired as a District Sales Manager at Doebler's in 2003 covering Southeast Pennsylvania. In 2011, DuPont business Pioneer Hi-Bred completed its acquisition of Doebler's as a part of Pioneer Hi-Bred business' PROaccess strategy. Then, in September of 2018, Doebler's became part of Seed Consultants, Inc. as a part of the Corteva Multi-Channel Seed Strategy and Doebler's was dissolved.

John has seen many changes in the seed industry over his years in the business. He has always been able to overcome any challenges thrown his way. He has led a very successful group of dealers that has grown and maintained his territory. In his years of service, he was recognized as "Most Improved DSM" and as "DSM of the Year."

John met his wife, Jane on a lake in Vermont where the family vacation home is located. He and his wife have two children, son Michael and daughter Erin. His son Michael and daughter in law Bethany have two children, Ella and Jack. Also, part of the family is his yellow lab, Maizey. Every July, John spends his vacation time up at the lake with his extended family. He will now be able to go Vermont and be in full vacation mode without juggling the busy season for seed sales. He is looking forward to spending much of his time with family and traveling.

John will be greatly missed by his peers and co-workers. Please join us in wishing him much success on living the retirement dream!

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April 2021	0%	0%
May 2021	0%	0%
In Season	0%	0%

LEADER UPDATE

By Daniel Call, CCA
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I am sure many of you reading this newsletter are much like me, thrilled to turn the calendar to 2021. There is something exciting about starting a new year. Even more so this year after we all endured an extremely challenging 2020 on many fronts. What is even more exciting, is the prospect of a new growing season and all the new challenges and rewards which lie ahead.

As we enter the 2021 growing season, this fresh start brings much more optimism than last year. First, it appears we are getting ready to exit a pandemic. That prospect in and of itself is reason for great optimism. Secondly, the commodity markets are in a much better position today than they were a year ago. As I write this article, cash corn is +$1.57 versus a year ago levels and soybeans are +$4.94. There is much more positivity as we speak to customers today than there was a year ago this time.

The folks at Seed Consultants want to help you take advantage of these improved prices by doing everything we can to help you maximize your production this year. We have several new products and technologies available to help you maximize your yield and mitigate the environmental stress your crops may face this growing season. Whether it be taking advantage of the superior performance of Enlist E3™ soybeans or Qrome® corn our products can offer season long benefits. Seed Consultants can also help your crop get off to an outstanding start with our industry leading seed applied fungicides and insecticides.

Seed Consultants is expanding our replicated testing for population and fungicide response in 2021. We believe taking these extra steps and giving you additional product information, will give our hybrids and varieties an advantage on your farm allowing you to produce more bushels. Please contact your local sales lead or agronomist to help answer questions regarding product placement as well as product response to different agronomic practices.

As always, we wish you a safe and bountiful 2021 growing season! Please be careful during the upcoming busy planting season.

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Editorial Board

Don't miss a thing

The SCI free e-newsletter comes via e-mail every Monday. The newsletter is packed full of current agronomic topics. Subscribe by sending your e-mail address to matt@seedconsultants.com or by signing up on our website at www.seedconsultants.com.