

Crops Bulletin

May 5, 2009
Issue 24



Prepared by
Paul Kassel
Extension Field
Agronomist

*Serving Clay, Buena
Vista, Dickinson,
Emmet, Kossuth, and
Palo Alto Counties*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964.

Soybean planting. Extension Agronomist Palle Pedersen has research that shows a yield advantage to planting soybeans in early May in northern Iowa. The advantages have been:

- More main stem nodes.
- Potential for earlier flowering.
- Longer reproductive time period.

Pedersen's research has shown that an earlier planting date will benefit fields with a higher yield potential the most. Fields with higher yield potential would have a high CSR, favorable soil pH, good drainage, and low SCN levels.

Bean leaf beetle mortality. Levels of bean leaf beetles are expected to be low this spring. The combination of insecticide application for soybean aphid control and cold winter time temperatures has reduced the overwintering populations of bean leaf beetles. The level of overwintering bean leaf beetles was reduced by 98/99% as a result of the 2008-09 winter conditions in the NW/NC crop reporting districts.

However, the soybean fields that emerge first in an area may still be damaged by bean leaf beetle. Therefore, check early planted fields at emergence for bean leaf beetle damage.

Soybean planting rates. Extension soybean specialist Palle Pedersen has conducted research on soybean planting rates the last several years. The research has shown that farmers should have a goal to have a final plant population of 100,000 plants per acre. Palle suggests that farmers should plant between 125,000 to 140,000 seeds per acre to achieve a final plant population of 100,000 plants per acre. That planting rate suggestion would apply for soybean drills as well as planters, no-till as well as conventional tillage and early or late planting dates.

ISU extension reorganization. Jack Payne, VP for ISU Extension, announced on April 30 that extension will reorganize. The reorganization is in response to reduced state revenues. The most visible change will occur at the county level – where county councils will decide how to direct the funding of programs for that county. Therefore, there may or may not be a staff person that has been known as a County Extension director. There may be a person in the county office that will focus on specific programs as directed by the county extension council.

Extension field agronomists (my position) will remain in place. However, our geographic area will likely change. That change will likely occur in late summer.

Prepared by Paul Kassel, Extension Field Agronomist
Phone: (712) 262-2264, Email: kassel@iastate.edu

Crops Bulletin