

For what it's worth...

West central experienced another soaking late Thursday and Friday. That rain on top of what was received before was enough but then cold temperatures followed behind. The cold air temperatures over the weekend knocked soil temperatures down well below 50°F. It looks like some danger of frost again tonight which could potentially hurt some growth on alfalfa stands. Corn that's already in the ground may be susceptible to rotting or corkscrewing. That's right there was good activity last week before the rain. There's a pocket along hwy 175 from Auburn to Battle Creek and a second pocket in the loess soils of Monona and Crawford counties that saw significant progress being made. If I were to make a guess I'd say the western half of my area is probably 25% complete with corn and the eastern half is more like 5%. What a big difference soil type makes. As of now I'm not aware of any planted soybeans.

First Planted Soybeans and Bean Leaf Beetles

No hurry to plant soybeans quite yet. Palle Pedersen, ISU state soybean agronomist, has not yet started to plant soybean for his plot; so you shouldn't be concerned with that yet either. He does plan, rain permitting, to start planting his plots mid-week. Last week there was an article in the [ICM News](#) relaying good news about Bean Leaf Beetle mortality from this winter's weather. Here in the west central crop reporting district that mortality was 93%. This does not say how many we can expect because it doesn't indicate how many are around but does give a good idea that most died over the winter. Never-the-less I would guess that the first emerged soybean field in the area will experience bean leaf beetle damage because the few remaining beetles are diligently waiting and watching. Food grade and seed beans are of greatest concern and should not be planted before other soybean in the area. Normally treatment should be considered when with counts of beetles per plant in the range of 1-8 beetles depending on growth stage, treatment costs and commodity price (see [Crop Watch](#) for a threshold chart). Having said that just because soybean prices are high doesn't mean we have a zero tolerance. Soybean have a tremendous ability to compensate for lower populations plus often times soybean are seeded are populations higher than needed for 100% yield potential.

Sensitive Crops Directory (aka vineyards, orchards, organics, bees)

The Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is developing a Sensitive Crop Directory (link at right). This directory includes vineyards, orchards and certified organic crops that are over 1 acre; fruit and vegetable crop intended for commercial use and over 1/2 acre; and honey bees. Go to the webpage list at the right for more information and a form to register your sensitive crop.

Producers and beekeepers who have previously registered need to confirm their registration between January 1 and April 1 each year. New producers and beekeepers must complete a registration form and submit it to IDALS. Field markers have been ordered and are available on a cost share basis to registered producers and beekeepers to post at the physical location of the sensitive crop or hive.

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Serving; Calhoun,
Carroll, Crawford,
Greene, Ida,
Monona and
Sac counties.

Webpage's to View:

- [Sensitive Crops Directory](#)
- [Iowa 4-Inch Soil Temperatures By County](#)
- [Corn Planting Guide](#)
- [Planter Tips](#)
- [CRP Options for Converting to Row Crops](#)
- [Soybean Factsheets](#)
- [Soybean Disease & Pest Management Field Guide](#)
- [Calculate Corn Yield Loss Due to Uneven Emergence/Height](#)
- [Corn Nitrogen Rate Calculator](#)
- [ICM News](#)
- [Farmland Values Increase](#)

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Integrated Pest Management Compromised by High Commodity Prices

With the talk I've been hearing already this spring and some things that occurred last growing season I must wonder if Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is being compromised. Things that make me wonder include: $1/2$ rates of glyphosate; tank mixing insecticides in with the last glyphosate as a clean up; using a transgenic trait, insecticide seed treatment and soil applied insecticide to control the same insect as insurance; or whatever the situation. All too often the focus goes on protecting the crop because of the higher than normal value but IPM still applies. An insecticide mixed with the last glyphosate application to "clean-up" the field for no additional application cost is unsound because all too often the aphid population is too low, the insecticide kills beneficial insects and it is likely a population growth with a second insecticide application will occur. One insecticide application at the proper timing will almost always be better than two ill-timed applications. Is a soil applied insecticide, seed treatment and transgenic trait all necessary just for insurance purposes.

Yes, it is important to manage pests to ensure yield potential. No, it is not a zero tolerance situation. Remember at the end of the year you want the balance sheet to be black. Yield times crop value gives gross revenue, making it important to ensure yield and give grain marketing an extra effort. Crop inputs equal expenses and it's your judgment on how much crop input insurance you want and need to use. Consider how much crop yield you're going to get based on the cost of that input. Will it pay off?

Crappy Stand Recipe (a satire)

I'd like to start with a disclaimer and giving credit. This may be coming a week or two late and the following has been adapted from an article by R.L. Nielsen, Agronomy Department, Purdue University. As Nielsen states, this is only a 'tongue in cheek' recipe to remind us that stand establishment and uniformity are important to realizing high corn and soybean yields. Having said that the following recipe will prepare one helping of a crappy stand of corn.

Ingredients:

- One field - preferably level, poorly drained land; whatever acre amount you wish
- One hybrid - preferably one with poor seed quality, low cold tolerance and high disease susceptibility
- A dash of organisms for seed rot and seedling blight
- A pinch of wireworms, seedcorn maggots and wireworms (choose a field converted from pasture or CRP)
- Spring tillage - preferably under wet conditions; enough to adequately destroy soil structure, create compaction and iron smearing
- Flavor with amide or growth regulator herbicides for desired aesthetics

Pre-program the weather to cooler and wetter than normal. If controls permit set to 1 inch of rain per week with soil temperature at 45°F for 4 weeks following planting.

Mix well and plant early or anytime before soils have consistently warmed to more than 50°F. Conduct tillage and plant immediately following rainfall events to ensure good sidewall compaction. Plant either excessively deep or shallow and as fast as possible to ensure uneven seed drop. For best results, plant into corn residue or a CRP/pasture with poor burndown. Top off with herbicide drift or carry over.

Serves 6: Farmer, fertilizer/chemical dealer, industry tech reps, seed dealer, Extension agent, university specialist. Plus the added benefit of neighborhood amusement.