

For what it's worth...

Regardless of what the weather has been, many of the corn acres have been planted. In my opinion, the west central area average is 85—90% planted with nearly 100% in the west and 67—75% planted in the east. Over the next week the landscape will be changing color. Why's that you ask? Corn planted as late as April 23 is starting to emerge. Switching quickly to soybeans, area wide we stand at 5—10% planted; again more planted to the west (25%) and less planted to the east (1%).

Black Cutworm Cutting; When Will it Be?

Now that corn is emerging in parts of the area there should be some consideration being given to scouting. The first thing to look for will be black cutworm larvae. The first significant black cutworm moth flight occurred around April 20th. From there we need to wait 300 growing degree days until the eggs hatch and the larvae grow large enough to cut corn seedlings. For west central Iowa the earliest scouting date would be May 17 to 20. And that date depends greatly on what temperatures are in the coming weeks. Watch the ICM News for an official prediction on scouting date in the near future.

Soybean Seed Treatments

Reports keep coming in on the quality of the 2008 soybean seeds. The comment I have been getting is "the bag is labeled 85% but the seed looks like 75%". Feel free to switch percentages to match your thoughts. There are two things that could be causing the poor problems; 1) mechanical damage, poor seed coat, etc. or 2) seed borne disease. If the problem lies in the seed due to mechanical damage further handling will further reduce the germination. This is not to say that a seed treatment should be avoided but where possible try to reduce handling of the seed. If the low germination is due to seed borne disease strongly consider an appropriate seed treatment. Phomopsis is the seedling disease of highest concern and is evident with poor germination and damping-off. A seed treatment that contains Maxim (fludioxonil) can reduce the damping-off. More information can be found in this [ICM News](#) article.

Soybean Planting Tips

- Wait for the right conditions; while the optimal planting date for west central Iowa is April 25 the caveat lies with waiting for soil conditions to be fit (i.e. soil temperature and moisture). Some seedling diseases such as Sudden Death Syndrome can be worse when soybeans are planted in wet conditions.
- Protect fragile/scarce seed; by waiting for the right planting conditions your chances of replanting go down. This is important because quality seed is in short supply this year and seed available for replants will likely be worse quality than the originally planted seed.
- Plan ahead for drought and bugs; sidewall compaction at planting can cause big problems, especially in drought years, so wait it out and again be patient. For bugs just remember that the first soybean field planted in the neighborhood will likely attract the varmints (bean leaf beetles) of the neighborhood so protect those seedlings and let your neighbor take the hit.

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Webpage's to View:

- [ICM News](#)
- [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](#)
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Corn Emergence Problems

As corn planting is well underway, emergence is starting and in some cases you are worried that emergence is not happening as quickly as you would like, here are some considerations for diagnosing corn emergence problems.

- No seed present; likely a result of a malfunction with the planter but could also be from birds or rodents digging the seed. If the seed has been taken there is usually some evidence of the digging and this typically occurs near sod from CRP or pasture.
- Leafing out underground; could be a result from several things including premature exposure to light from cloddy soil (tillage when too wet), deep seed placement, compaction or soil crusting, acetanilide exposure under wet conditions, wet conditions alone or a combination of things.
- Poor radical or coleoptile development of the seed; result of seed rot or low seedling vigor as a result of seedling diseases. White to creamish root/shoot tissue is a live, healthy tissue. Brownish, yellowish or black tissue is a sign of dead or dying tissue.
- Swollen seed but no sprouting; result of poor seed to soil contact or shallow planting and the seed imbibed moisture then dried out.
- Uneven emergence with presence of discolored or malformed seedling; may be result of herbicide damage and could be verified by checking planting depth, checking labels of herbicides used and visibility of injury symptoms such as twisted roots, club roots and purple plants.
- Hollowed out seed; result of seed corn maggot or wireworm, pests should be present.
- Uneven emergence; result of non-uniform seedbed conditions and/or non-uniform planting depth. Non-uniformity could be from variable soil temperatures, soil moisture and/or seed to soil contact. Poor seed to soil contact could be problematic due