



May 18, 2009
Issue 3

Serving
Dallas, Jasper,
Madison,
Marion, Polk,
Poweshiek
and Warren
counties

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Across The Fence

Whatever happened to the season we used to call “Spring”? The last two weeks have been unseasonably cool and wet with an intermittent “nice” day. And to top this off, there was a very light touch of frost the night of May 17th.



Light frost injury to corn.

These weather conditions are not only stressful to growers, but also to the newly planted crop. Corn growth and development has been at a stand-still for the first half of May. Slow development can put corn seedlings at risk to disease, insect, and weed pressures. For these reasons, there may be some growers that will need to make replant decisions.

When is Replanting a Corn Stand the Best Option? Corn yields can be reduced dramatically with planting dates after early May. This makes replanting an important decision. Accurate determination of why the stand was reduced and an objective assessment of the vigor of the remaining stand will be crucial. Consider:

- ❖ Are remaining plants spaced evenly throughout the field or do large gaps exist?
- ❖ Can replanting be done immediately?
- ❖ Is stand loss due to insects, diseases, or other issues? A healthy population as low as 20,000 ppa that was planted timely may still have as much or more yield potential as a field replanted in late May.
- ❖ If corn doesn't contain an herbicide trait, can adequate weed control be accomplished at reduced a population?

More information relating to this decision process is available at the following link.

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/0514elmoreabendroth.htm>



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Seedling Blight. The cool wet conditions that have recently hindered corn growth are also conducive for attack from soil fungi such as Pythium. The seed may rot or newly emerged seedlings will be stunted or die from decay below the soil surface. Seedling blight is common in areas where water has ponded, but can also be more widespread in poorly drained fields. Eroded hill sides with heavy clay may stay wet longer than usual and lose population due to Pythium. If areas of reduced population are large enough, replanting may be warranted.

Insect Update. Localized black cutworm moth flights were reported at the end of April and again in early May. The cool temperatures that have delayed corn development have also delayed black cutworm egg hatch. Since the predicted cutting dates are based on accumulated degree days, this means cutting could start shortly after Memorial Day in southern Iowa, and the 30th of May in central and northern Iowa.