

Crop Happenings

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*Serving Boone,
Hamilton, Hardin,
Humboldt, Marshall,
Story, Tama, Webster,
and Wright County*

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Harvest starts. Farmers across central Iowa have started combining soybeans. Nearly all report that the grain moisture is 10 – 12% but the stems are still green. Combining is slow due to the green stems. A little corn has been combined but the main focus is on soybeans. Farmers in the hail damage areas have combined corn. Yields depend on the level of damage. Some farmers report yields of under 15 bu. per acre in the worst areas. The grain from those fields typically has a test weight of 40 – 45 lb. per bushel and damage levels are running about 10%. Typically elevators expect to see about 2% grain damage during a normal year. Other farmers are getting yields in the 60 – 75 bushel per acre range; still others are seeing yields in the 120 bu. per acre range. It all depends on the level of damage.

ISU Extension host grain quality meetings. Meetings were held in Callender on September 17 and in Hubbard on September 24 to discuss grain quality issues in the hail damage area. Approximately 185 farmers attended. Dr. Alison Robertson explained what ear rots would likely be present and how to identify them, Dr. Steve Ensley addressed mycotoxins, and Dr. Charles Hurburgh talked about grain storage and grain quality issues. Farmers were relieved to hear that weather conditions haven't been conducive for aflatoxin development. Aflatoxin in grain should not be an issue. The specialists recommended testing grain for other mycotoxins. Charlie Hurburgh advised farmers to cool damaged grain quickly and avoid storing it if possible. Details of the hail damage – grain quality survey were explained at the meetings.

Fall stalk nitrate test (FSNT). It's time to take FSNT tests. This test simply tells you if there was adequate nitrogen during the season. A total of 15-20 stalks should be collected for each sample. The 8-inch stalk sample is taken from the lower portion of the stalk. The first cut is made 14 inches above the ground; the second cut is made 6 inches above the ground. Place the samples in a paper bag, not plastic, and keep the sample dry and cool. Get the sample to a lab as soon as practical. The ISU publication that explains the FSNT is [Cornstalk Testing to Evaluate Nitrogen Management](#).

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