CROP NOTES for April 10 2012
Past issues of Crop Notes are posted at:
www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/info/crops.htm

Iowa State University Extension Information for Northeast Iowa
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WEATHER
Soil Temperature
Soil temperatures in northeast Iowa are currently about 50. You can view Iowa soil temperatures at anytime at the following web site: http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/NPKnowledge/

INSECTS
Alfalfa Weevil
For most fields, Alfalfa Weevil is still at very low levels. I still only had one report near threshold levels and that was in the Edgewood area. We are still a ways off from harvest, so scouting should continue. The easiest way to scout for Alfalfa Weevil is to start with a sweep net just to survey a field. If you catch some in the net, then follow the proper scouting procedure.
in the following ICM article (in the paragraph above Table 1) to determine if the economic threshold is reached.  http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2012/0402hodgsonsisson.htm

Black Cutworm
Southern Iowa continue to see some significant flights. Northeast Iowa still has not had a significant flight. The cold nights may also impact the moth flights somewhat. The web posting of Black Cutworm moth flights is at: http://apps.csi.iastate.edu/pipe/?c=entry  As significant flights occur, dates for initial scouting in corn will be predicted and communicated through various venues (ICM News, Crop Notes, various ag news media, etc.).

Common Stalk Borer Control in Corn – Option 2
Those of you that lose corn plants in the first few rows along grassy field borders may have Common Stalk Borer problems. Go to the following web site for photos of the problem: http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/icm/2007/6-4/stalkborer.html  Common stalk borer has 4 ‘timing period’ options for management to reduce either "field border" problems, or "in-field" infestations. Option 1 timing has now passed. Options 2 timing is soon.
Option 1. This was discussed in previous Crop Notes http://www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/info/crops.htm
Option 2. Apply insecticide on grassy areas bordering corn fields during egg hatch -- 575 to 750 DD (base 41, Jan. 1). Current DD for northeast Iowa are at 555 DD. The 575 to 750 DD window will run roughly from April 11 to April 25. The Cedar Rapids area is within this window currently at about 640 GDD.
Option 3. Apply insecticide with "in-field" herbicide program if perennial grasses and ragweed (populations from last year) are extensive. If larva are in these weeds (quackgrass, wirestem, and giant ragweed) when the weeds are killed in spring with postemergence herbicide, the larva are forced to move out of the weed and into something else such as emerged corn.
Option 4. Apply insecticide during larvae migration -- 1,100 to 1,400 DD (base 41, Jan. 1). Larva too large for a grass stem, leave the grass at this time to find a larger plant to live in (i.e. corn). Often occurs around mid-June, but we will track the degree days and let you know.

ALFALFA
PEAQ
Predictive Equation for Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ) is a tool designed to help you estimate when to harvest 1st-crop alfalfa based on quality. It’s uses plant height and stage of development to estimate quality. The fact sheet explaining the method is at: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam/peaq/PEAQ.pdf  In general, when alfalfa is in bud stage and reaches a height of about 26-28 inches, it’s time to harvest dairy quality alfalfa. To assist in the monitoring of alfalfa development this spring, we have a PEAQ web site where staff are posting RFV based on PEAQ from different fields in Iowa. The web site is: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam/peaq/  Currently most fields in the top tier of counties in Iowa are just 12 inches tall, but some fields in Fayette and Bremer counties are already up to 18 inches tall. It is best that you check your own fields. Spring growth and development will vary from field to field because of differences in varieties, harvest management, fertility, soil type, and more.

Frost Concerns
With last night and tonight’s cold temperatures, Steve Barnhart, ISU Extension Forage Specialist, posted an article discussing these issues. Go to: [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2012/0409barnhart.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2012/0409barnhart.htm)

CROP NOTES
Previous Postings
Just a reminder that previous postings of Crop Notes are available at: [www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/info/crops.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/info/crops.htm) FYI, our web site will undergo an update procedure on Friday which may temporarily limit access to this site. Those not on the Crop Notes list last week, the April 3 Crop Notes included information on cover crops, and corn and soybean planting information (date, rate, row spacing, etc.).

ICM NEWS
Timely Articles
An excellent source of timely crop production information is the ICM News at: [http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/) You can get free automatic ICM News updates by subscribing to the site in the upper left hand corner of the page. Just click on Subscribe to Crop News”.

THISTLES IN PASTURES
Musk & Bull Thistles
Musk thistles and bull thistles are much easier to kill if they are sprayed when they are in the rosette stage, before they begin to bolt in the spring. Although 2,4-D and dicamba can do a good job of killing emerged thistles, products that have greater soil activity, such as Milestone (3-5 oz/A), Forefront (1.5-2.0 pt/A), and Grazon P&D (2-4 pt/A), usually provide superior control, partly because they will also control seedlings that emerge after application.

Canada Thistle
For the most effective control of Canada thistle, it is best to wait until the thistles have a chance to grow some and are about to put on buds, which is usually in late May or early June. Canada thistles have extensive underground root systems. It is easy to kill the above ground part of the plant, but much more difficult to kill the root system so they will not be back the next year. Milestone, Forefront, and Grazon usually give the most consistent control. Higher rates are needed than for biennial thistle control. Crossbow is not a good product for Canada thistle control, but is very effective on multiflora rose and other woody and broadleaf weeds.

EVENTS
Apr. 24, Northeast Iowa Young Dairy Producer Peer Group, Calmar
10:30 am to 2:30 pm. The young producer peer group is meeting at two farm locations, one before lunch and one after lunch to discuss heifer facilities. The group meets for lunch at the Train Station in Calmar at 11:30 am to discuss benchmarking and review herd data. To join this group, contact Jenn Bentley at [jbentley@iastate.edu](mailto:jbentley@iastate.edu) or call 563-382-2949.

May 17, PQA Plus® Training Session, Fayette
3:00 to 5:00 pm at the Fayette County Extension Office. 201 E. Clark, Fayette. Preregistration is required with a minimum of 5 participants necessary to hold this session. To preregister, call the
Fayette County Extension Office at 563-425-3331 or email Mark Storlie mstorlie@iastate.edu More information on PQA Plus® and TQA® is available at: http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/PQAPlus.html

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