

SHELBY COUNTY CROP TALK

April 24, 2020

Crop Scout

This past week, Shelby County was humming with spring fever in the form of tillage and planting activity. Where I dug for seed, the soil was cool and had adequate moisture for planting. However, soil temps at 8 am have been in the low 40s. What does this mean for corn and soybeans? No issue if the forecast is for warm days with occasional rain. But given that corn needs about 110 GDUs from planting to emergence, as well as the current Accuweather forecast, corn planted on April 21 would be predicted to emerge on May 5 (14 days in the ground). Additionally, if the first water taken in by a corn seed is cold, successful emergence may drop. Wheat that I've seen has had minor frost damage on the leaf tissue from the cold nights. Yield impact should be slight to none since it did not likely reach the growing point of the stem.

Planter Check

I don't think there is one thing that I have more of a love/hate relationship with than the first day of planting. I can't wait to get back in the fields and start a growing season again. My joy is usually replaced by frustration due to the lack of progress made that first day. Sometimes this is the result of taking time to make needed planter adjustments. So, what should we be looking at when we get out to check our work? Missy Bauer from B&M Crop Consulting has a lot to say on the subject.

The first thing is to get out and dig. Missy recommends digging a cross section of a trench instead of our usual top down fashion. Digging a cross section allows you to check seed depth and how packed is the soil in the trench verses side walls. A good seed trench should have uniform depth, good seed

to soil contact, and you should find uniform seed spacing as you check down the row. Checking to make sure the planter is running level is important. The bar is designed to run level with the ground; if the bar is unlevel we increase the chance to see skips and doubles due to ricochets. To check this place a magnetic level on the main toolbar so it is parallel with the ground. Start planting under normal conditions and have someone walk along side to make sure the toolbar is level. Finally, Look to make sure you have a uniform planter pass. This just means that across the width of the bar and the entire length of the pass every unit looks the same.

Getting out to check the planter can be frustrating but, it is a cheap way to hopefully help save some yield. It also allows the opportunity to admire the great views our "offices" have.



Give me a call if you would like me to look over your planter setup with you.



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