

As we approach fall harvest several concerns about the corn crop are evident. Concerns include the effect of root lodging on harvestability, tip-backed ears from the heat and drought, Goss's wilt, drought stress firing, nitrogen deficiency from the wet spring, and potential stalk rot issues arising from early senescing plants. A severe early morning wind storm on July 11 (I-80 to Hwy 20) led to some green snap and severe root lodging. More localized wind events and heavy rains happened on July 24 (Kalona) and July 27-28 (Dubuque). Unfortunately the areas not hit as hard by wind have suffered through a serious drought in July and August, with some areas receiving less than two inches of rain since late June. On the positive side, we have generally observed few corn rootworm beetles and Western Bean Cutworms, however Japanese Beetles and aphids were troublesome in isolated areas, and refuge or conventional corn is showing significant European Corn Borer damage.

Ear Development

In general this year we have good ear girth and had reasonably good synchrony between pollen and silk, however many fields are exhibiting shorter ears than normal due to tipping back up to 10 kernels per row because of the heat. The number of kernel rows is determined during vegetative developmental stages V4 to V10 and we generally had excellent conditions during that time. The tipping back is quite dependent on the drought and heat conditions during the first seven to 10 days of grain fill. Especially in the area around and south I-80 and it appears that earlier planted fields and/or earlier hybrids that were past this critical stage of development before the rain of July 24, and the cooler temperatures that followed, are hurt the most by this ear tip-back. Fields that were compacted, weedy, short of nitrogen, disease prone, or generally more drought prone, exhibited more stress. Corn-on-corn was more challenged as well. It is often difficult to understand hybrid differences against the backdrop of other factors. Always compare hybrids under similar planting date and field conditions.

Disease Concerns

Disease development started fast and has continued in areas where rain has been more frequent. Many customers took our advice to apply fungicides to their corn-on-corn fields, non-corn borer fields, and on hybrids with less natural resistance to Grey Leaf Spot (GLS) or Northern Corn Leaf Blight (NCLB). In areas with limited rain, since flowering, and in fields with timely fungicide applications, these diseases are under control. However GLS is a concern in wetter areas not treated to a fungicide. The rapid escalation of Goss's Wilt (GW) is a major concern though. It can be confused with NCLB or Stewards Wilt, but lesions have black specks and can appear water soaked. Undeveloped ears below the primary ear can be rotted and the whole plant can die. For those with email earlier we sent this ICM email newsletter link for details: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2011/0805robertson.htm>. The only GW control is tillage, crop rotation and planting hybrids which exhibit tolerance to GW. Miller Hybrids is fortunate that all our hybrids exhibit reasonable tolerance to GW, but some are more tolerant. The root rot potential could be high this year because of the premature senescence from drought and GW and the disrupted root systems from wind damage. Timely harvest is warranted in fields where plants show significant root lodging, GW, GLS, or drought or nitrogen stress, as these plants will have less stalk integrity due to premature senescence and less health to fight off the stalk rotting fungi. Plan your harvest by scouting now! Walking fields is good, but I also suggest aerial viewing which can generally be done with a pilot at a small airport for around \$100 or less.

Maturity

As of today (8/26), we are much above normal for heat units. Earlier hybrids have already reached

physiological maturity (blacklayered) and most corn planted the first two weeks of May will be blacklayered in the next two weeks. This means silage cutting should already be in full swing on corn planted the first half of May, and in many cases it is already on the late side. Your combines need to be ready to roll in a couple weeks! Corn Harvest on root lodged or badly stressed fields must be completed with moistures in the 19 to 25% range to maximize harvestability!

Seed Production

This is a year that has been particularly troublesome for the seed production industry! The July 11 wind storms reduced seed units by 8 to 10% of goal, the heat and drought took another 20% or so and much more of specific hybrids, and now Goss's Wilt and drought has prematurely killed some seed fields and may have reduced sellable seed due to reduced quality. Miller Hybrids is doing what we can to add additional seed production in Chile, but the high cost and the low availability of production fields, due to high demand, means we will probably be short of many hybrids this year. Keep this in mind as you order seed. Seed will be allocated on a first-come basis, as we won't know for several months (after harvest and quality checks) how much we will have. The actual available seed from Chile won't be known until close to planting.

Soybeans

Miller Hybrids will be offering Roeschley Hybrids brand soybeans for 2012 planting. The beans are all cyst types and have all shown consistently outstanding performance under the SDS and White Mold the last two years. We offer beans from 2.0 to 3.8 maturities with RR2Y, RR1, or Liberty Link genes. We entered 4 key varieties into the Iowa State soybean yield trial plots.

Alfalfa

Miller Hybrids continues to offer a great alfalfa lineup which starts with MA-375HY/BR our premier fine stemmed Sunstra[®] hybrid alfalfa. MA375HYBR is a cross between a branched rooted alfalfa and a tap rooted alfalfa. We also offer premium branched rooted, tap-rooted and Leaf Hopper tolerant varieties. Do not cut your alfalfa between September 15 and October 15 (or the first frost, whichever comes first). Let us know any fall seeding needs soon. Don't plant unless you have moist conditions.

Corn

We have an outstanding lineup of elite genetics with many trait options in our corn lineup for 2012. This year we added several new Viptera Hybrids, Glyphosate tolerant hybrids, a new CBLLRW hybrid, a new Liberty hybrid and we refreshed our CB lineup. The Miller portfolio competes with any company and offers unique options that will not be duplicated by most other companies.

Talk to your Miller Seed Experts for any corn, soybean, or alfalfa questions: **Chad Gillam VP Sales (319-330-8021)**, **Doug Cling, Sales Agronomist (319-325-6190)** or **Bob Miller (319-325-6158)**. We have attractive prepay options (best by September 13, 2011) for elite corn hybrids with the right traits for your farm. Call us to help you understand the issues related to your fields in 2011. Please visit us September 13 from 10:00AM to 7:00 PM for our open house and seed day at our office one mile west of Kalona on Hwy 22.

