

### Comments on crop and concerns

This has been a year filled with tremendous opportunity to raise an outstanding crop of corn, but also a year that will yield disappointing results in many fields or parts of fields. As I walk through fields and predict dramatically different potential results in adjacent areas, I am reminded of the need to control compaction, apply timely and adequate N, control foliar disease, and choose hybrids with a good balance of yield stability and adequate agronomics. As in 2008, we are again seeing problems with either a single application of deep applied N (such as injected manure) or surface applied N. These differences are magnified on corn-on-corn ground that could use better drainage. Even though we had a cold winter, we did not break the compaction which occurred during harvest, fall manure application, or tillage, because the ground was often insulated by a blanket of snow during the coldest periods. Now is a good time to create a plan to address compaction, drainage or fertility concerns, so 2010 is even more productive.

### Maturity

Eastern Iowa was 371 to 390 Base 50° F degree days behind normal from May 1 to September 13 [www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/091409.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/CropNews/2009/091409.htm) (similar to 1992). This usually would translate to about 2 to 3 weeks behind normal, however due to the combination of root rot leading to stalk rot and recent dry weather we have seen many hybrids die quickly in the past week. It also appears we are maturing our crop with less degree days than normal. When a plant dies, black layer forms immediately so be careful not to confuse true maturity causing blacklayer (physiological maturity) with premature death. It appears we are at blacklayer with many 106-108 day hybrids around Iowa City, but few hybrids in Northern Iowa are at blacklayer. The current warm weather could change that quickly. In Central and Southern Iowa fields that were planted early, we are going to be safe from frost soon, but to maximize yield, you may need to be able to efficiently harvest wet corn.

### Potential yield

I feel we may not quite reach the yield potential forecast for Eastern Iowa due to lighter kernel weight, as many plants died prematurely or are reaching blacklayer with less degree days to feed the ear. In some fields we also limited yield due to less than optimum plant available N and disease control this year. If you have the Miller Hybrids field planner, there is a formula to calculate yield. The formula is: **(kernels per ear)\*(ears per acre)\*.01116=Bu/Acre at 15.5%**. This formula is highly dependent on using the right kernel weight factor (.01116 +/-) and getting an accurate sample of harvestable ears for the field (including poor areas). In summary, there clearly will be some outstanding yields in many corn fields, but variability will be considerable and timely harvest may be critical to prevent field loss.

### Scouting

Scout your fields for stalk quality issues and schedule harvest according to the risk of stalk and root rot. Iowa State has published a useful guide called "Scouting for Corn Diseases". Miller Hybrids has a supply of these guides to pass out, or you can order them from the extension service. High risk fields include fields with inadequate N or with disease susceptible hybrids, however sometimes your highest yielding hybrids, which tend to pull extra photosynthate from the stalk should be harvested first. Harvesting corn in the 19% to 24% moisture range in 2009,

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to reduce the risk of harvest loss, may ultimately save money. If you want help in assessing your fields (irregardless of the brand of corn), please contact your dealer or Chad Gillam (319-330-8021) or me (319-325-6158).

## Miller Research

Miller Hybrids research is conducted under tough conditions to allow the identification of hybrids that can tolerate the stresses that are typical in your fields. In 2009 we have 4 main research sites involving approximately 55 acres. Three of the four sites are corn-on-corn and we have soils ranging from sandy to tight black soil. Two sites were sprayed with fungicides. One site has some hybrid comparisons with and without rootworm insecticides, to determine the best refuge options. Our plan is to understand hybrids so that when we recommend them for your farm, you will not experience negative surprises. We focus our research on understanding hybrids from our research and from your fields, and then adding to our portfolio only those high-performing and well understood hybrids that are needed to maximize your financial return per corn acre.

## Trait Options

We focus on genetics first and traits second, as we are determined to provide you what you want for your farm. Many people have been pleased with a Roundup<sup>®</sup> or glyphosate weed control program on corn because it is “cheap” and easy. With “generic-Roundup” at bargain prices, it is cheap until you also consider technology fees and the earlier onset of weed resistance. Miller Hybrids has an excellent set of stacked hybrids and refuge hybrids for those of you who choose a glyphosate option or for those who don’t. We offer an industry leading set of hybrids for those who plan to use a conventional herbicide option or Liberty<sup>®</sup> or Ignite<sup>®</sup> herbicides. If you are considering corn-on-corn and want to control volunteer corn from this year’s Roundup tolerant corn, we have you covered with a set of Liberty Link<sup>®</sup> hybrids that out-yielded the Dekalb<sup>®</sup> VT3 hybrids in last year’s ISU Central East tests.

## Programs

Miller Hybrids has a number of programs which reward loyalty and growth with our current customers. We have a pallet program which provides free seed (3 to 5 units, depending on traits) for each pallet (60 units) of seed purchased. We have an attractive prepay discount schedule where a September payment will be 2% less than any future month.

If you or anyone you know is looking for an independent seed company, who truly wants to place your needs before ours, please give us a call. Chad and I would appreciate the opportunity to spend time discussing hybrids with you at one of our show plots or in local fields at your convenience. Our goal is to understand your farm and help reduce your cost per bushel, by putting together the right hybrid and trait package for you. **Chad Gillam, V.P. of Sales (319-330-8021) and Bob Miller, President (319-325-6158)** are available to take any questions or to further listen to your needs and provide suggestions. You can also visit us on the web at [www.millerhybrids.com](http://www.millerhybrids.com) or reach the office at 319-683-4682 or toll free at 866-WIN-CORN. Let Miller Hybrids be: “**Your Corn Innovators, Turning Potential into Reality<sup>SM</sup>!**”

P.S. If you have an email address and received a paper copy, kindly send a note to: [bob.miller@millerhybrids.com](mailto:bob.miller@millerhybrids.com) and we will send futures newsletters by email.