



Miller Highlights

Sept. 2010

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 and 2009, we are again seeing problems with either a single application of deep applied N (such as injected manure) and even N side-dressed in early June before excess water led to additional denitrification loss. 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 2011 is even more productive.

Maturity

Eastern Iowa is about 300 heat units above normal so far, compared to 2009 when we were about 300 heat units below normal. We are already seeing early hybrids black-layered (physiologically mature). We are also seeing a combination of root rot leading to stalk rot and hot weather caused some hybrids to die quickly. When a plant dies, black layer forms immediately so be careful not to confuse true maturity causing blacklayer (physiological maturity) with premature death. Leaf diseases have become very prevalent on fields not sprayed with fungicides. This is especially true on earlier hybrids or hybrids which have multiple stresses such as N stress and root rots.

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 a shorter grain fill period. 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: **(# kernel rows * # kernels per row)*(ears per acre) *.01116 = Bu/Acre**. 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 in early corn or disease infested corn. The maximum yield of corn is often expressed at 22% harvest moisture and if you wait until beans are harvested and let corn dry to 15%, your yield loss will probably significantly exceed drying costs.

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". High risk fields include fields with inadequate N or with disease susceptible hybrids. However, sometimes your highest yielding hybrids tend to pull extra photosynthate from the stalk should be harvested first. Harvesting corn in the 18% to 24% moisture range, 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).

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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 2010, we have 5 main research sites involving approximately 65 acres. Three of the five sites are corn-on-corn and we have soils ranging from sandy to tight black soil. Three sites were sprayed with fungicides. Our plan is to understand hybrids so that when we recommend them for your farm, you will not experience negative surprises. We focus our business 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® 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® or Ignite® herbicides. If you want to control volunteer corn in 2011 from this year’s Roundup tolerant corn, we have you covered with a set of high-yielding Liberty Link® hybrids, without Roundup.

Programs

Miller Hybrids has a number of programs which reward loyalty and growth with our current customers. We have an attractive prepay discount schedule where a mid-September payment will be 12%

Fall Shows

Please visit Miller Hybrids at booth 9611 of the VIT tent 2010 Farm Progress Show in Boone on 8/31 through 9/2. Call Chad or Bob for free tickets at the gate. On September 16 we are still planning a preliminary “Grand Opening” at our new building site (1213 Larch Ave.) one mile west of Kalona on Hwy 22. Join us anytime from 4:00PM to 8:00PM for a great meal and a chance to learn more about Miller Hybrids.

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 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 RealitySM!**”

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