



Clunette Kernel

Fall 2009 Edition

As most of us are still trying to beat the heat, there are a few of us that are starting to dust off the combines and get things geared up for harvest. Fall is right around the corner which means school starts, the leaves change colors, football season begins and oh yeah the latest edition of the Clunette Kernel has arrived!

Spring and Summer Overview

As spring arrived in the area most of us found ourselves in waders! This spring was one of the wettest springs on record which had most of us worried about getting our crops in the ground. As many of us know wet conditions at planting time lead to a number of other potential problems throughout the growing season such as; compaction, poor stands due to seedling rots, and disease such as sudden death. Early crop evaluation was key in diagnosing these problems so that they could be monitored throughout the season.

As spring faded into summer we saw our wet conditions change into very dry conditions. July was a very dry month in our area, fortunately for us it was also a cool month. These dry, cool conditions helped to keep the disease pressure low and aided during pollination in corn. However we faced another problem, aborted kernels on ears. Fortunately for our area we saw rain in early August which greatly helped our corn.

What should I Be Looking For Now?

So what can we expect as we head into this fall you ask? The White Mold has hit the beans and hit them hard. The 8-10 inches of rain we saw in early August in addition to the cool nights we've had have created the right

conditions for white mold. Also the longer dew periods contribute to the onset of this fungus. Symptoms you might notice would be the yellowing of the soybeans and the wilting of the leaves. As the disease progresses you'll notice the white fungus growing on the outside of the stem and the beans bleaching out in color. The best control methods of this disease are; practice crop rotation, plant lower populations to allow for more air movement through the canopy, and look for beans with a strong tolerance to White Mold.

Another common occurrence this year has been the presence of ear rots in our corn. With the cool temperatures we saw this summer we saw longer dew periods in the morning. These two conditions set the stage for abnormally high infection rates of ear rots. There are three common ear rots in this area, Gibberella Ear Rot (GER), Diplodia Ear Rot (DER), and Fusarium Ear Rot (FER). All of these ear rots greatly reduce yield and will lead to other problems at harvest. So what are the characteristics of these diseases?

GER starts from the tip of the ear and infects downward. The mold usually looks pinkish to red as it grows downward on the ear. Usually the husks adhere tightly to the ear once it's been infected making the ears hard to shuck. While this disease spreads quickly it rarely will infect an entire ear. Cool wet weather 21 days after silking favors this diseases development. How can you prevent GER? Look for tolerant or resistant hybrids to GER. Also remember that this disease over winters on old crop

residue making crop rotation an even more important and valuable tool. If you have a high infection rate in a field you might consider harvesting that field a little early. Another thing to keep in mind is that after harvest you want to dry this corn down to at least 15% moisture to prevent this fungus from continuing to grow in the bin. Keep in mind GER produces mycotoxins which will make this grain inedible for mainly hogs.

DER is just the opposite of GER in the fact that the point of infection starts at the base of the ear instead of the tip. This mold usually starts out white and as the disease matures it turns grey in color. Corn is most susceptible to this disease three weeks after silking and cool conditions with abundant rain fall fuel the infection cycle. Corn Borer as well as Corn Earworm and Western Bean Cutworm damage can provide a sufficient point of entry for spores. This disease shows up worse in fields that are continuous corn back to corn. DER can infect and ruin whole ears, causing ears to shrink in size and kernels tend to look stuck to the husks. While this disease does not appear to produce mycotoxins it can still make feed less palatable for livestock. Management for this disease is similar to GER; resistant hybrids, crop rotation and fall tillage practices help to prevent this disease the most.

FER is the third most common ear rot we face in this area. Unlike GER and DER, FER can infect any part of the ear. Usually you'll notice a cluster of kernels with a powdery white or grey mold growing on and between them. These kernels will eventually turn brown or dark grey in color and may have a starburst effect to them. This mold gains access to the ear due to damage from birds, hail, or insects. However infection can come from the stalk as well. Drought and warm temperatures are the favorable growing conditions for this disease. Keep in mind that FER is another mold that produces mycotoxins, so any corn infected by this disease will not be used for livestock feed! It's important to once again practice good fall tillage practices as well as manage high insect

pressures. Talk with your seed dealers about hybrids resistant or tolerant to FER. For additional information please contact Gabe, John, Jared or Meredith. Also attached to the news letter is an information sheet through pioneer on all the above ear rots for additional help.

Fall Herbicides

Fall is upon us and that means it's time to start thinking about applying a fall herbicide. Why apply a fall herbicide you ask? There are several reasons to apply a fall herbicide one of the biggest is controlling the growth of chickweed as well as other weeds. It's especially important to control chickweed growth early due to the fact that it serves as an alternate host for soybean cyst nematodes. It is also a host to the seed corn maggot, wireworms, and white grubs. These pests can have a dramatic impact on crop stands in the spring as well as plant health later in the growing season. By controlling these hosts early in the fall you eliminate these alternate food sources in the spring. Another aspect of utilizing a fall herbicide is that once spring is finally here, with no extra weed coverage, those fields will dry out much quicker and allow soils to warm up faster, giving you an advantage when it comes to planting.

There are several herbicides available to growers interested in a fall program. Canopy EX is listed for those fields going to soybeans the following year. It provides excellent burndown and residual control for winter annuals and perennials as well as spring annuals. Simazine is used in fields going to corn and only those fields. It too provides excellent control of annual grasses and broadleaves. There are two products that can be used if you are not sure what crop you will be planting in a field the following year. Autumn, a product from Bayer CropScience, provides great control of most winter annuals and perennials and can be applied either before the ground freezes in the fall/winter or in the spring before

planting. Harmony Extra is another product through DuPont that can be used on fields going to either corn or soybeans. Harmony Extra like Autumn can be applied either in the fall or also in the spring and works excellent at controlling broad leaves and grasses.

Again it is important to control weed growth as quickly as you can and utilizing a fall herbicide program is an excellent way to prevent problems in the spring. If you have further questions on fall herbicide programs or any of the above mentioned fall herbicides please contact Gabe, Jared, or John.

Fertilizer Cost Outlook

Last year we saw fertilizer prices sky rocket to all time highs. Those prices had many of us scared as to whether or not we'd be able to fertilize our crops. This year we see just the opposite happening with fertilizer prices. Nitrogen as a whole is down 50-60% from last year. Phosphates are also down 50-60% from last year's costs. Potash is down 40-50% from last year. So what does this mean for you the grower? If you saw yourself cut back last year on your total inputs this year it will be more economical to apply them. Commodity prices have dramatically dropped since last year, with that decrease fertilizer prices have also dropped.

As far as supply goes, we are in excellent shape for next season. Supply in the US is good which is quite a bit different than the scenario we were faced with last year. For further information on specific costs please contact John, Gabe, or Jared.

Glyphosate

We've recently seen a dramatic drop in the price of Glyphosate over the past couple of months. Glyphosate costs are way down compared to last season. There are still good and competitive programs available utilizing branded products. Next season we will also be offering a product that will compete with low cost generics. For further information on these programs and products please feel free to contact John, Gabe, or Jared.

What Can Soil Sampling Do For You?

As we move into fall it's time to start thinking about applying fertilizer for next year. Year after year growers ask the questions; "What do I need and where do I need it?" With soil sampling we can tell you just that!

Soil sampling measures the relative nutrient status of your soil and is extremely helpful for efficient fertilizer application. Here at Clunette we offer soil sampling in 2.5 and 5 acre grids. By sampling in a grid you allow yourself the ability to apply your fertilizer using variable rate technology (VRT). What is VRT and what does it mean for applying fertilizer you ask? In any given field one can find different fertility levels throughout the field. By using VRT you allow yourself to only apply the necessary amount of fertilizer needed in any certain spot. For a grower this saves you money by only applying the specific amounts of fertilizer needed in any given spot. VRT is also positive for the environment, due to the fact that it gives growers the ability to limit amounts of fertilizer used throughout a field. Sampling can be done either in the fall or spring so you can time it with your fertilizer application.

It is important to keep track of your soil fertility for many different reasons. The biggest being that it has an overall affect on plant health which is directly related to yield and thus revenue. One doesn't have to use our grid sampling method, but being aware of your soil fertility is just one part of good farm management. Price usually varies with the type of sample pulled and amount of samples you have taken. If you have further questions about soil sampling or cost please feel free to contact Gabe or Jared for a personal consultation.

Side by Sides and Weighing the difference!

While growers are getting out their combines and getting them ready we are dusting off the weigh wagons. As usual we have placed several different chemical trials

throughout the area to gather our own personal data here at the elevator. We then share these results with our growers so that you may see results relative to your area. This information is more valuable than data collected from another state, and is another way for us to bring valuable information about new products to our growers here in North Central Indiana. Along with the chemical trials, we have also placed or our growers have placed side by side trials of various hybrids and varieties of corn and soybeans. In today's competitive seed market it becomes even more important to weigh these trials. While yield monitors are a good tool to have for your farm they will not be as accurate as weighing with the weigh wagon in some instances. Yield monitors measure flow, so it is tough to distinguish the differences in test weights between different hybrids. Not only will the weigh wagon allow you to see the results immediately it also allows us to see the trial during harvest and evaluate many factors that could be affecting the outcome of the trial. We also enjoy being in the field and having a close and personal relationship with our customers. Our goal is to find the right hybrid or variety for the right field. Evaluating and learning this information first hand while it is being harvested allows us to serve you better. If you are aware of a trial in one of your fields, before harvesting it, please contact Gabe or Jared so that they may come and collect that data.

For those growers interested in our starter and nitrogen plot data we will have that available late fall or early winter. Feel free to contact Jared, Gabe, or Meredith if you are interested in knowing the conclusions for those plots!

Yield Monitor Calibrations!

The time of the yield monitor is upon us! Remember that Jared and Gabe are available to come out and do calibrations on your monitors for you. Please try to anticipate your harvesting schedules a little bit and give them as much notice as you can. This way they can get everyone scheduled in a timely fashion. We

understand how important this information is to our growers so if you can let us know in advance they can do their jobs thoroughly.

Reminders!!!

- Now that we are moving into harvest it is a good time to bring in your planter units for calibration. Virgil and Duane will be taking on that task again this year and they do a great job.
- We are currently in our new office here at the elevator! We thank everyone for their cooperation during the construction. Also if you have not been in yet to look around please feel free to stop in at any time. Tours are always available!
- With the new office came our new truck scale! We are assigning numbers to all trailers and wagons that come into the elevator this fall. Our new scale will record and keep track of your individual number every time you come in with a load of grain. If your truck/trailer already has a number we will use that number instead of requiring you to place one of our stickers on your trailer. This is for your benefit and we should have fewer errors this fall!

This harvest is shaping up to be a little wetter than normal. There is some good news however! Gas prices are considerably lower this year than they were a year ago. What does this have to do with harvest you ask? Drying charges have dropped this year compared to last which is good news for those who will be bringing grain into the elevator. For specific costs please contact John, or Gabe.

Well folks that does it for this addition of the Clunette Kernel! Look for the next addition to come out around Christmas time! Have a Safe and Happy Harvest!!

Quote of the Season

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”

-Alan Kay-

