

MESSENGER-INQUIRER

 Cooperative
Extension Service



Farm Update

daviess.ca.uky.edu

AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES
EDUCATION

Clint Hardy

Daviess County Extension Office

July 13, 2024

Mid-Summer Crop Care

It's been quite a summer for farmers in this area. They are at a reflection point in the growing season to evaluate crops and develop an action plan until harvest. Spring began with a warm March and April. Very little rainfall during those two months had some drawing comparisons with spring 2012. At that time, I shared not to worry about what the weather would be like in the summer. Enjoy getting a crop planted in ideal conditions. Many farms took advantage of the opportunity and planted their higher, drier farms in the last days of March through April. Only one or two rains across the county temporarily slowed the momentum.

Then May had multiple heavy rain events. The effect of the water was severe for thousands of acres. Entire fields were flooded, requiring replanting. Corn and soybeans planted but not emerged prior to the rain suffered reduced stands. There were thousands of acres not planted that just wouldn't dry out. Significant reduction in the efficacy of soil residual herbicides in place before the rain and timely herbicide application delayed by wet fields, allowed weeds to grow much larger than we recommend attempting to control with herbicide.

Now in July, with nearly a month delay between plantings, we have two corn crops and two soybean crops growing. There are corn fields in the county that are completely through pollination and will soon be approaching dough stage. Many other fields will not be tasseling

MESSENGER-INQUIRER

before late July, if not August. Similarly, there are soybean fields completely podded and fields that were just recently planted. One blessing has been the concerns of a 2012 repeat could not be farther from what we're experiencing. Somehow, possibly by luck alone, we've experienced somewhat mild temperatures in June and July while the rest of the country seems to be in a record heat wave. The entire county has received weekly rain ranging from ½ inch to nearly 2 inches since mid-June. Cool temps and adequate rainfall are the recipe for optimum pollination and grain fill. The earliest corn and soybean are well on their way to a good finish. The late crop also has great potential if these weather conditions continue through August.

There are risks, one being wind. Fortunately, wind in the Ohio Valley from Hurricane Beryl was minimal. Wind gusts above 40 can wreak havoc on corn both before and after tassel. Likewise, rain totals from Beryl were adequate, not extreme. Flash flood thunderstorms result in damage, and we've had enough of that this year.

Weeds and disease are other threats to how this growing season will finish, both may cost more than originally budgeted. We know that southern corn leaf rust doesn't overwinter in Kentucky. Spores must be carried to this area in air movement. Hurricane Beryl was the earliest Atlantic hurricane on record, spending a week and a half drawing fungus spores out of the tropical Caribbean. It then spent 5 days dispersing the spores onto corn and soybean fields from Houston to Owensboro. With the risk of SCLR initiating in July added to the very late planted corn acres, a situation could develop that will require one if not two fungicide applications to keep this late May/June planted corn disease-free until grain dent stage. SCLR was confirmed June 26 in the southeast corner of Arkansas. Monitoring for movement is found at

<https://cropprotectionnetwork.org/maps/southern-corn-rust>.

MESSENGER-INQUIRER

Waterhemp is another threat, especially in fields where it was never brought under control before planting. Waterhemp resistance to glufosinate and 2,4-D and dicamba is real, and it's headed our way. Don't ever plant into living, growing waterhemp. We'll first see resistance in fields planted before waterhemp was eradicated by paraquat or heavy tillage. It's hot, hard work but getting out of the truck and pulling these survivors is necessary to help prevent resistance. Waterhemp and palmer amaranth seeds are tiny and move easily in water. Often the only areas of fields where hand removal may be necessary are along the borders or areas where water movement has concentrated.

The Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is an Equal Opportunity Organization with respect to education and employment and authorization to provide research, education information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.