



ACRES^{OF} GOLD

THE CORN YIELD OPTIMIZATION GUIDE



HARVEST

ENVIRONMENT

HARVEST SCOUTING & SCHEDULING

Monitoring fields closely after black layer (R6) to determine optimal harvest timing can be essential to help maximize harvest efficiency, potential grain yield and profitability. Key things to consider include:

GRAIN MOISTURE

- Shoot for a grain moisture level that strikes a good balance between minimizing harvest losses and managing grain drying costs.
- Allowing corn to dry too long in the field can increase mechanical losses due to ear drop, stalk lodging and kernel shattering.
- High temperatures, drought and low relative humidity after R6 can all contribute to more rapid drydown.

STALK QUALITY

- Fields that have encountered stress post-pollination are particularly susceptible to stalk cannibalization, stalk rots and associated lodging potential. Scout to prioritize fields with potential stalk quality concerns for early harvest.

GRAIN QUALITY

- Fields where ear molds such as Aspergillus, Diplodia, Gibberella or Fusarium are present should be considered for early harvest to help preserve grain quality. Continued field drying can allow prolonged development of ear molds and increase potential mycotoxin development.

PRODUCT SELECTION

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Harvest is our opportunity each and every year to quite literally reap what we sow. It presents both the occasion to celebrate our successes in the current year and to identify missed opportunities, evaluate management missteps and begin formulating a plan for greater success in the next cropping season.

KEY FACTORS TO EVALUATE

- YIELD!!!
- Harvest moisture
- Standability and stalk strength
- Disease presence and severity (stalk rots, ear rots, foliar diseases, etc.)
- Insect damage (European corn borer, corn rootworm, corn earworm, etc.)

EVALUATE FOR BETTER YIELD POTENTIAL NEXT YEAR

- Successful harvest evaluations are a key step toward achieving higher yield potential next year.
- The more information you gather during harvest, the better prepared you will be to select top-performing corn products to suit the agronomic needs of your fields.
- In addition to evaluating product performance on your farm, it is important to monitor yield trial results from your local area.



HARVEST

FERTILITY

SOIL SAMPLING & ANALYSIS

Soil tests are recommended at least every 4 years; however, sampling more often can be beneficial in identifying and addressing potential fertility issues impacting yield. In most geographies, fall is the best time to collect and analyze soil samples.

KEY ITEMS TO CONSIDER WHEN COLLECTING SOIL SAMPLES

- Depth of sample
- Tillage practices
 - Nutrients may become stratified in no-till and reduced-till systems.
 - If this is the case, a separate soil analysis should be run on the soil from the upper 2" of the soil cores.
- Time of year
 - For consistency of results samples should be pulled during the same timeframe each year (ideal window is between harvest and when the ground freezes).

RESIDUE MANAGEMENT

TIMELY RESIDUE MANAGEMENT

Clear management practices for decomposing residue may improve the ability of the corn crop to overcome challenges of heavy residue.



HARVEST CORN-ON-CORN FIRST

Harvest fields to be planted back to corn next year first to help maximize the amount of time for residue decomposition prior to cold winter temperatures which limit soil microbial activity.



STALK CHOPPER

Chopping stalks into smaller pieces can aid in residue break down, but having a mat of residue may make planting more difficult.



COMBINE SPREADERS

Combine spreaders can help distribute residue evenly.



VERTICAL / AGGRESSIVE TILLAGE

“Vertical” tillage, not subsoiling but rather a tool comprised of disks with notches that runs parallel with the tractor can be used to “mulch” residue. Aggressive tillage can help maximize contact of residue and soil. Tilling, aggressive or “vertical”, as soon as possible after harvest can help take advantage of warmer weather and increased microbial activity. Often tillage can be done in the fall and the spring. To prevent plugging or clogging, the implement should be set properly and the soil should not be too wet.