Soybean & Corn Advisor, Inc.

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Trip Report

Over the weekend I did a crop tour through the western Corn Belt traveling through Iowa, southwestern Minnesota, eastern South Dakota, eastern Nebraska, and northern Illinois. Below are my observations.

Iowa corn

- The corn in Iowa is probably the best I have seen for late July.
- Its very tall, emerald green, healthy, mostly uniform with a high plant population.
- The maturity is 1-2 weeks later than normal. Most is pollinating right now, latest will pollinate first week of August.
- Pollination will be good because there is virtually no stress anywhere in the state.
- Later corn will need a late fall to reach maturity.
- Things would need to fall apart in a hurry not to have a record yield.
- Two more well timed rains could carry the crop to the end.

Iowa soybeans

- Generally very good, but not as good as the corn.
- Uniform and healthy, not exceptionally tall, some fields shorter than normal.
- Soybeans don't look as good in the northeastern and north-central part of the state. In that part of the state the soybeans on the hillsides are shorter and showing some stress.
- The crop is generally one to two weeks later than normal in maturity.
- Cool temperatures are stretching out maturity, will need a late fall.
- Soybean yields could easily surpass trend line, would need a good August and September to achieve a record.

Iowa soil moisture

- Best moisture is in the eastern third and western third of the state, lawns are lush and green in those areas.
- The moisture is not quite as good in the middle third of the state.
- Not causing a problem yet, but could start to be a problem if doesn't rain within 10 days in the middle third of the state.
- Soybeans would be affect first if weather turns dryer because corn roots are down into the subsoil where there is ample moisture.
- Temperatures felt more like September than July.

Southwestern Minnesota corn

- Corn generally looks very good, but not as good as Iowa.
- Crop development 1-2 weeks slower than normal.
- Pollination won't be complete until early August.
- Generally tall, dark green, healthy, high plant population, some fields are uneven.
- Some moisture stresses starting to appear in dryer areas especially as you get closer to central Minnesota.
- Crop has a good potential, but it's not in the bin, needs rain in short order to insure good yields.
- Will definitely need a late fall to reach full potential.
- If August turns dry could be disappointing after a very promising start.
- If dryer areas of Minnesota receive good rains, corn crop would probably end up above trend line.

Southwestern Minnesota soybeans

- The soybeans are not as good as the corn.
- Some soybeans shorter than normal, slower developing probably due to cool temperatures.
- The potential is there for a good crop, but will need rains in August to finish the crop.
- Soybeans will also need a late fall.
- The Minnesota soybeans have the potential for an above trend line yield, but August weather will be critical.

Southwestern Minnesota soil moisture

- Soil moisture is getting short, its gets dryer the further north you go in the state.
- Lawns are starting to turn brown.
- Isolated stresses developing, nothing beyond repair if moisture would return within a week or so.
- Continued dry weather could affect soybeans more than corn.

Nebraska corn

- Irrigated corn is very tall, uniform, very dark green, high plant population, pollinating right now and on track for potential record yield.
- The best corn I saw on this trip was irrigated corn in Nebraska.
- Dryland corn doing almost as good as irrigated, which is normally not the case in Nebraska.
- The Cornhuskers are going to have a lot of corn to husk this fall!

Nebraska soybeans

- Irrigated soybeans were "wow". They are waist high, dark green, lush, and some of the best soybeans you will ever see for late July.
- Soybeans look as good as the corn.
- The irrigated soybeans are going to be record breakers because they are well advanced in development and will not require a late fall or a late frost.
- Non-irrigated soybeans are very good, but not as good as the irrigated soybeans, most could go two weeks without a rain before problems would start to develop, except for northeastern Nebraska where they could use a rain.

Nebraska soil moisture

- Soil moisture is good in most of the state, lawns are green and growing, but a dry area is developing in northeastern Nebraska.
- In northeastern Nebraska the lawns are starting to turn brown and they could use a rain.
- I saw isolated areas in northeastern Nebraska where moisture stresses were developing.
- Probably only half of the irrigation systems were running over the weekend indicating that there was ample soil moisture.

South Dakota corn

- There is a wide range of corn development in South Dakota. The most advanced corn is pollinating, the most delayed corn is still two weeks away from pollination.
- There is a lot of uneven corn due to delayed emergence or stunted growth due to excessive moisture.
- I was not impressed with the corn crop and I think it's going to struggle to get above trend line yields.
- The crop will certainly need a late fall.

South Dakota soybeans

- Very uneven. Some fields are knee high and look very good. Other fields are barely six inches tall and look poor.
- Overall impression was that the crop was uneven, ragged, short in height, and delayed in development.
- Crop definitely needs a good August (warm and wet) and as late of fall as possible.
- I don't know where the get the 71% good to excellent. That is not what I saw in the state.
- I think the soybeans will be hard pressed to hit trend line and very hard pressed to get above trend line.

South Dakota soil moisture

- Soil moisture is variable; some areas still have standing water, other areas starting to dry out. Some lawns lush and green, others starting to look a little brownish.
- Part of the state would benefit from drying out, part of the state would benefit from increased moisture.

Northern Illinois corn

- A lot of the crop is very late, but coming on strong.
- Most advanced corn is pollinating, most delayed corn probably won't pollinate for two more weeks.
- Most advanced corn is tall, dark green, lush, high plant population, poised for a very good yield.
- Most delayed corn is chest high, dark green, more uneven, plant populations not quite as high, but it is coming on strong.
- Late corn will definitely need as late of fall as possible.
- I was pleasantly surprised by the corn crop in northern Illinois. It could end up quite good.

Northern Illinois soybeans

- The best soybeans are still not as good as they should be for this time of the year. They are knee high, lush, and growing quickly. They could end up with an average type of yield potential.
- The latest soybeans are very short, 6-8 inches tall, a month behind normal in development. Will need the best possible fall weather. Even with a good fall, they will be well below an average type of yield.
- I thought the soybeans in northern Illinois were still sup-par.

Northern Illinois soil moisture

- Ample moisture in north-central and northwestern Illinois. Some areas with standing water from Friday night storms. A dry period would be beneficial. Lawns are lush and green; everybody was out cutting the grass.
- Storms caused some lodging and green snap on corn in northwestern Illinois.
- Northeast Illinois is dry, lawns turning brown, could use a rain, won't be serious unless it doesn't rain for 1-2 weeks.

Summary for the Western Corn Belt

- Corn is doing better than the soybeans.
- Much of the corn is late, will need an extended fall.
- Nebraska corn yield could be record.
- Iowa corn yield could be a record as well.

- Minnesota corn yield could be above trend line, but not a record.
- South Dakota corn yield probably only trend line.

- Nebraska soybean yields probably a record.
- Iowa soybeans could also set a record, depends on August rains.
- Minnesota soybeans have some dryness issues; yields might be above trend line, will depend on August weather.
- South Dakota soybeans will be a stretch to achieve trend line.

Corn Condition Declines Slightly, Soybeans Hold Steady

Corn – The nationwide condition of the corn crop declined 1% last week and it is now rated as 70% good to excellent. Six states reported improved corn condition last week and eleven states reported that the corn condition had declined. Most of the improvements were reported from the southern Corn Belt and most of the declines were reported from the northern and eastern Corn Belt. The top five rated corn states are Kentucky, Iowa, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota. The five lowest rated states are Texas, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Missouri.

We have been talking about dryness developing in the northern states and it is starting to show up in crop conditions with Wisconsin and Michigan now being two of the lowest rated corn states.

Soybeans – The nationwide condition of the soybean crop held steady last week and it remains rated as 67% good to excellent. Eight states reported that the soybean condition improved last week and nine states reported that the conditions had declined. Generally the improvements were found in the central and southern Corn Belt as well as the Delta. The declines were found in the northern and western Corn Belt. The top five rated soybean states are Kentucky, Iowa, Nebraska, Tennessee, and Kansas. The five lowest rated soybean states are Louisiana, North Carolina, Michigan, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

While the Delta states are still some of the lowest rated soybean states, the rains over the last few weeks coupled with cooler temperatures have helped to improve the crop.

Soil moisture – The nation's topsoil moisture held steady last week. Nine states reported wetter soils last week and seven states reported dryer soils last week. Generally the improvements in soil moisture came from the southern and eastern Corn Belt as well as the Delta. Dryer conditions were reported in the northern and western Corn Belt. The five states with the best soil moisture are Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Tennessee, and Indiana. The five states

with the driest soil moisture are Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

I think it is important to note that Wisconsin and Minnesota are now some of the driest rated states as far as topsoil moisture is concerned. While Iowa is still rated as one of the wetter states, I think some dryness concerns might be starting to develop in central Iowa. The central reporting district of Iowa now has 16% of its soil rated as short or very short. I saw the same thing when I drove across the state on Sunday. The developing dryness is not causing any concerns as yet, but if it doesn't rain there in a week or two, it will start to cause a problem.

Crop Estimates Unchanged This Week

Corn – The cooler than normal temperatures have been a benefit for the pollination of the corn crop. Pollination is going to be successful virtually everywhere in the Corn Belt. The down side to the cool temperatures is the fact that the corn crop is developing at a slower than normal pace. If the crop development continues slower than normal, than you would start to worry about frosts. I think an average frost date could cause some damage to the slower developing crop. An earlier than normal frost would cause a lot of damage to the corn.

The nationwide soil moisture held steady this week, that's good. The temperatures stayed cool, that's good. Developing dryness across the northern states is not so good and it is something that needs to be watched. I could not come up with an overwhelming reason to increase the corn yield, so I left it unchanged this week at 157.0 bu/ac.

Soybeans – The soybean crop is not as good as the corn crop. A lot of the crop continues to be shorter than normal and slower than normal in its development. The continued cooler than normal temperatures helps conserve the soil moisture, but the cool temperatures slow down the development of the crop. The soybeans need to speed up their development. A cooler than normal August would stretch out the soil moisture supplies, but it would put the crop at greater risk to potential frost damage.

The nationwide soybean yield was left unchanged this week at 42.5 bu/ac. Some of the soybeans have a lot of ground to make up during the month of August. What the crop really needs is a warm and wet August to make up for the slow development during June and July.

2009 U.S. Crop Estimates

	Current Estimate	Maximum	Minimum	2008-Production
		billion bushels		
Corn Production (80.1 million harvested)	**12.57** (157.0 bu/ac)	**12.97** (162 bu/ac)	**12.17** (152 bu/ac)	**12.101** (153.9 bu/ac)
Soybean Production (76.5 million harvested)	**3.25** (42.5 bu/ac)	**3.32** (43.5 bu/ac)	**2.98** (39.0 bu/ac)	**2.959** (39.6 bu/ac)

2009 Attitude Rating

	Eastern Corn Belt	Western Corn Belt	Northern Corn Belt	Southern Corn Belt	Delta	Nationwide
Corn	+.5	+1	-1	0		+.5
Soybeans	+.5	+1	-1.5	+1	+1	0

State Trend Line Changes

Corn

Colorado improved from at-trend to above trend.
Kansas improved from at-trend to above trend.
Tennessee improved from below trend to at-trend.

Soybeans

Kansas improved from at-trend to above trend.
Tennessee improved from at-trend to above trend.
North Carolina declined from at-trend to below trend.

2009 U.S. Crops – Trend Line Comparisons

	States Below Trend Line	States At Trend Line	States Above Trend Line
Corn	Illinois 14.4	Michigan 2.7 ?	Iowa 15.5
	Missouri 3.6 ?	Indiana 6.7	Nebraska 10.4
	North Carolina 1.0	South Dakota 5.8	Minnesota 8.9
	Texas 2.6	Wisconsin 4.4	Kentucky 1.4
		North Dakota 2.7 ?	Pennsylvania 1.5
		Ohio 3.9 ?	Colorado 1.2
		Tennessee 0.8	Kansas 4.5
	% of acres 21.6	**% of acres 27.0**	**% of acres 43.4**
Soybeans	Illinois 12.0	Michigan 2.6 ?	Iowa 13.0
	Indiana 7.1	Wisconsin 2.2 ?	Nebraska 6.6
	Missouri 6.6	South Dakota 5.2 ?	Minnesota 9.2

Mississippi 2.8	North Dakota 5.1	Kentucky 1.8
Louisiana 1.3	Arkansas 4.5	Kansas 4.6
Ohio 6.0		Tennessee 1.9
North Carolina 2.4		
% of acres 38.2	**% of acres 19.6**	**% of acres 37.1**

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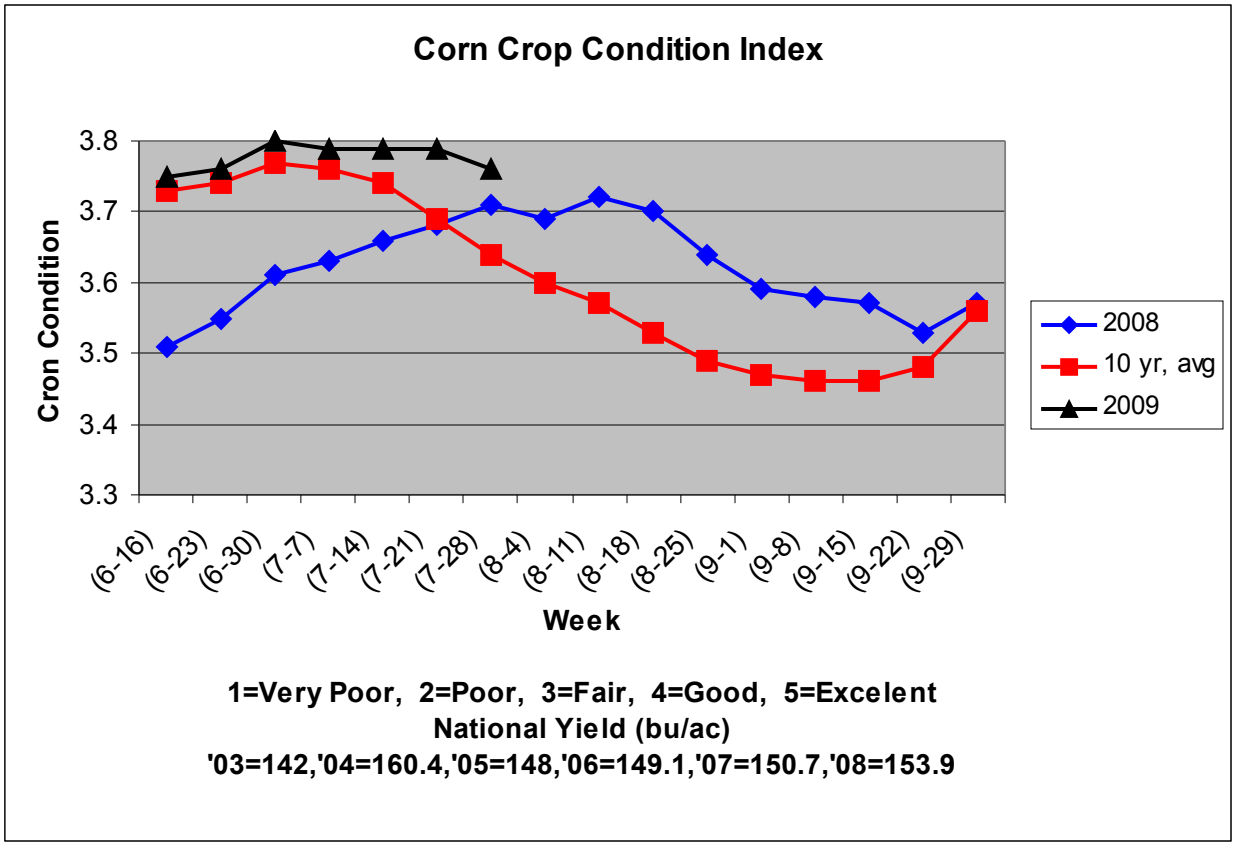

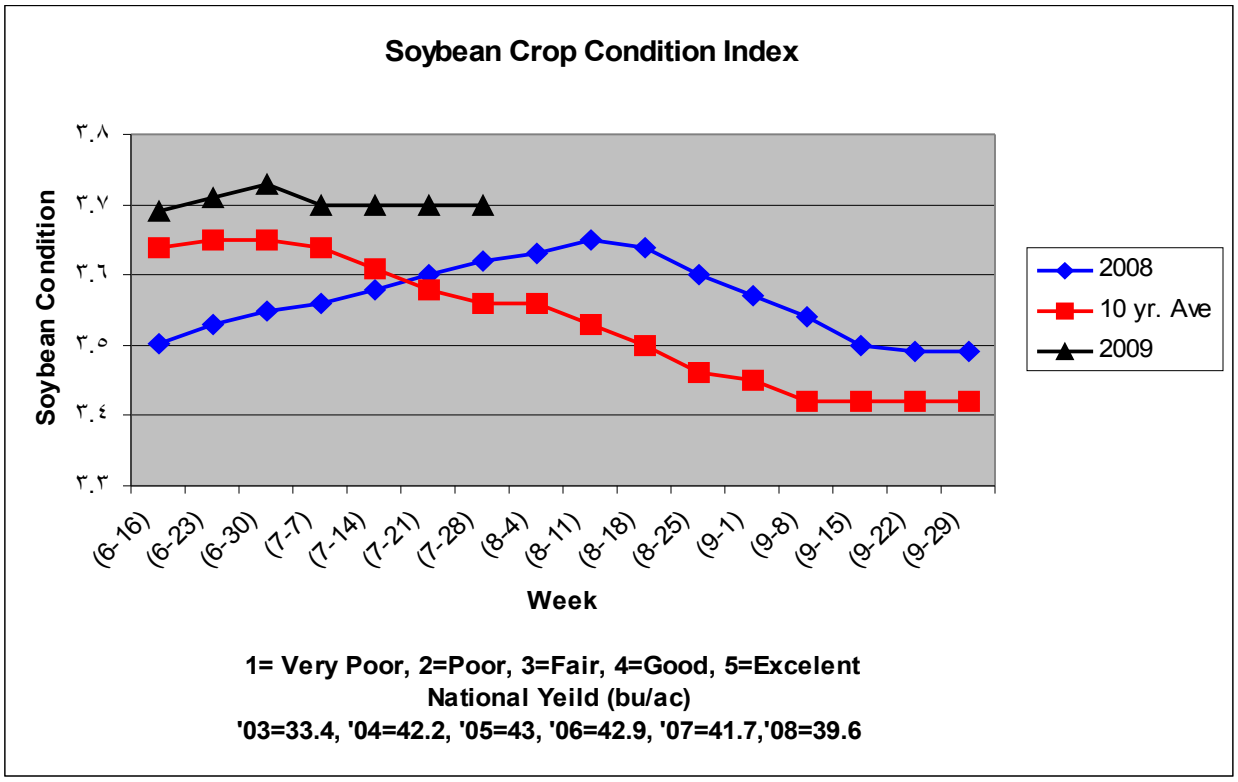
Soybean Crop Condition Index
Soybean Condition
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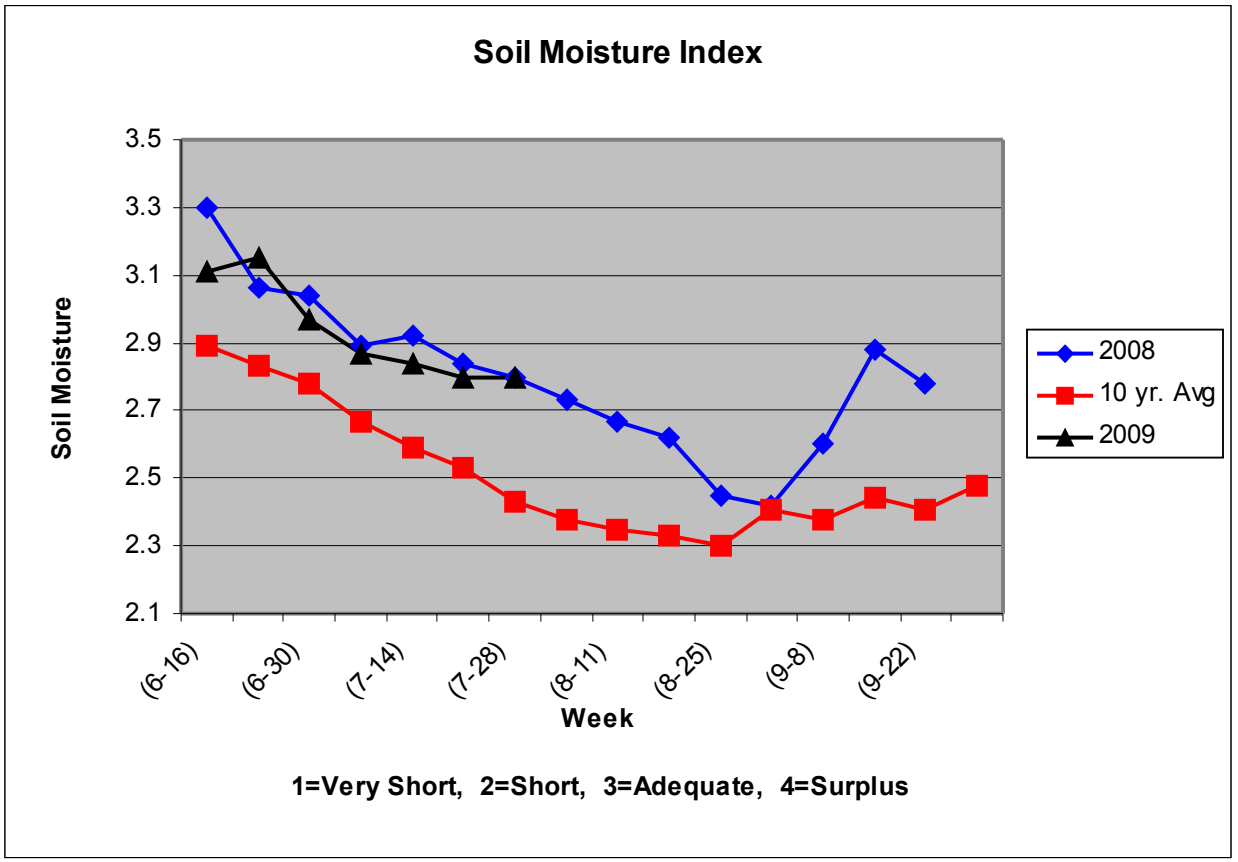
٣.٧
٣.٦
٣.٥
٣.٤
٣.٣
(6-16)
(6-23)
(6-30)
(7-7)
(7-14)
(7-21)
(7-28)
(8-4)
(8-11)
(8-18)
(8-25)
(9-1)
(9-8)
(9-15)
(9-22)
(9-29)
Week
2008
10 yr. Ave
2009
1= Very Poor, 2=Poor, 3=Fair, 4=Good, 5=Excelent
National Yeild (bu/ac)
'03=33.4, '04=42.2, '05=43, '06=42.9, '07=41.7,'08=39.6


Soil Moisture Index
Soil Moisture
3.5
3.3
3.1
2.9
2.7
2.5
2.3
2.1
(6-16)
(6-30)
(7-14)
(7-28)
(8-11)
(8-25)
(9-8)
(9-22)
Week
2008
10 yr. Avg
2009
1=Very Short, 2=Short, 3=Adequate, 4=Surplus