



## LATE PLANTING CONSIDERATIONS

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4/30/2009

To: Dealers and Customers

Subject: Corn Planting Date is Important, but.....

The following is a summary about planting dates from Emerson Nafziger at the University of Illinois and Bob Nielsen from Purdue. We all understand that you are worried about what the magic date is to change to shorter season hybrids because you are worried about the number of Growing Degree Days (GDDs) left until crop maturity. Farmers believe that there are only so many GDDs available in a given growing season prior to a killing frost. I have already heard the question, should I switch to soybeans, should I plant an earlier hybrid? I know that very little corn has been planted in Illinois. This is not much concern yet because we have seen that most of you will plant the whole crop in 6 to 8 days.

Nielsen and others have shown that corn hybrids reduce their GDDs they need to mature as planting is delayed. This means that a hybrid that is planted later than normal will mature with fewer GDDs than if it was planted at an optimal planting date. Nielsen says that the number of GDDs required from planting to physiological maturity in corn decreases nearly 7 GDDs per day of delayed planting after May 1. For example, a hybrid planted June 1 will mature approximately 210 GDDs sooner than it would if planted May 1, (30 days x 7GDDs/day). That is about 10 to 11 days quicker. A 116 day hybrid planted May 15 should mature approximately 1 week before the first average killing frost in North Central Illinois.

So it is probably too early to fear monger about the prospects of a hybrid maturing due to the delayed start to plant corn in 2009. Dr. Nafziger reminds us that planting two weeks after the optimum date might well produce higher yields than planting into cool, wet, compacted soils closer to the optimum date.

Good luck this spring and I am still planning on visiting your planters as they start to roll. Give me a call if you need something.

Best regards,

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Vice President

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