

Proper Planning: Lock in Your Seed Needs Early for 2012

While we may still be tying up loose ends from the 2011 crop season, it is crucial to be proactive in planning for the 2012 crop season now. Corn yields seemed to come out as sporadic as the rain showers we were hoping for this past season. Mother Nature did not only limit grain corn yields, but seed corn production was not immune to the variable weather conditions as well. The challenging growing season of 2011 will affect seed corn supplies in 2012, and companies are currently developing strategies to meet what is expected to be another banner year for corn sales. Some seed suppliers are seeing as much as a 20% decrease in seed yield. Many companies spread their seed production across the Midwest in an attempt to hedge their production, but many seed corn fields were put under the same gamut of stresses as grain corn was. Planting was timely, but weather conditions ranged from excessive rain, drought, wind, and hail across the nation. Since seed corn production is an inbred plant, it is more susceptible to these stresses. So what now?

As seed harvest wraps up, companies are looking closely at their numbers and seeing which hybrids were most affect by the challenging growing conditions. They also must consider which hybrids would be most probable to be in high demand for the next growing long before any combines are rolling or yield maps are being plotted. With the high need to mitigate risk in seed production, companies must plan for production to be short. This will help cover, for example, a crop failure in a specific location. However, with the widespread growing challenges throughout the Midwest, there were few areas that went through the growing season unscathed this past year. This leaves many companies looking south to meet the demands of the 2012 crop season. South American seed production provides an alternative and allows companies to make up for short seed supplies, as we are seeing in 2011. This option does come with its own challenges. Growing seed in South America creates added stress to the supply chain. Once a company secures their position on specific hybrids compared to their projected need, the acres must still be secured and the crop planted. The harvested seed must be conditioned and be shipped to the United States in time for planting. As farmers look to get a jump on earlier planting each year, winter produced seed has definitely presented a challenge. Seed, at times, may show up to the retailer and be taken right to the planter to be put in the ground. Other instances have been that a backup hybrid must be used because the seed just does not arrive in a timely fashion from the supplier.

Moral of the story is proper seed planning for 2012 now will help set you on the path to getting those high demand hybrids that will break yield records. The best selection is available to those who plan ahead. Utilize your Central Valley Agronomist to help properly place seed on your farm and lock in the high demand bin busting hybrids now. The only way Central Valley is successful is if you are successful, and that comes with early planning for the 2012 crop season.

