USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Indiana Crop & Weather Report

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CROP REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING MAY 4

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY

Precipitation varied across the state allowing many farmers to have a good week for planting corn and soybeans, according to the Indiana Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Some farmers in central areas of the state are now done or nearly done planting corn and are turning their focus to soybeans. Many areas had frost early in the week with some northern areas receiving a dusting of snow Monday night. Planting of corn is running slightly ahead of last year but 5 days behind the 5-year average pace.

FIELD CROPS REPORT

There were 4.8 **days suitable for field work**. Thirty-six percent of the intended **corn** acreage has been **planted** compared with 34 percent last year and 53 percent for the 5-year average. By area, 37 percent has been planted in the north, 45 percent in the central region, and 20 percent in the south. Three percent of the corn acreage has now **emerged** compared with 6 percent last year and 14 percent for the 5-year average.

Sixty-nine percent of the **winter wheat** acreage is **jointed** compared with 74 percent last year and 82 percent for the 5-year average. One percent of the winter wheat is **headed** compared with 7 percent last year and 12 percent for the 5-year average. Winter wheat **condition** is rated 68 percent good to excellent compared to 37 percent last year at this time.

Major activities during the week included: planting corn and soybeans, tillage operations, spreading dry fertilizer, applying anhydrous ammonia, spraying herbicides, hauling grain to market, hauling manure, and taking care of livestock.

LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE REPORT

Pasture condition is rated 12% excellent, 42% good, 30% fair, 10% poor and 6% very poor. Pastures continued to improve, but growth has been a little slow due to cooler than normal temperatures. Livestock remain in mostly good condition.

CROP PROGRESS TABLE

Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Avg
	Percent			
Corn Planted	36	11	34	53
Corn Emerged	3	NA	6	14
Soybeans Planted	6	NA	8	17
Winter Wheat Jointed	69	53	74	82
Winter Wheat Headed	1	NA	7	12

CROP CONDITION TABLE

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excel-lent
	Percent				
Pasture	6	10	30	42	12
Winter Wheat	1	4	27	52	16

SOIL MOISTURE & DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK TABLE

	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	Percent		
Topsoil			
Very Short	0	0	0
Short	3	1	1
Adequate	75	76	72
Surplus	22	23	27
Subsoil			
Very Short	0	0	0
Short	2	1	0
Adequate	70	66	79
Surplus	28	33	21
Days Suitable	4.8	4.8	4.2

CONTACT INFORMATION

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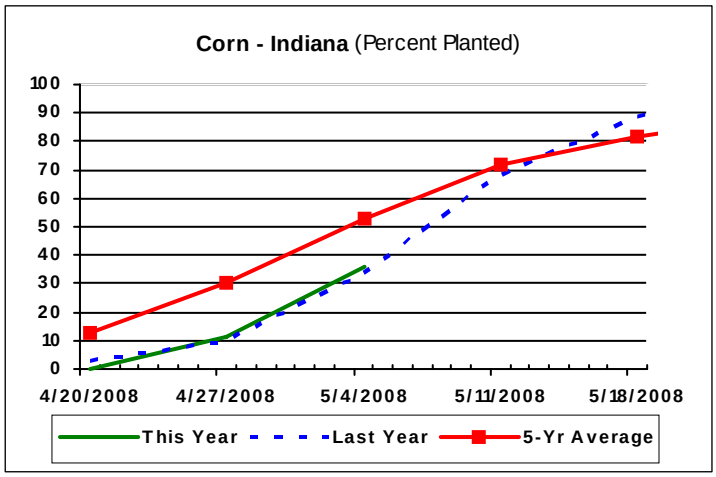
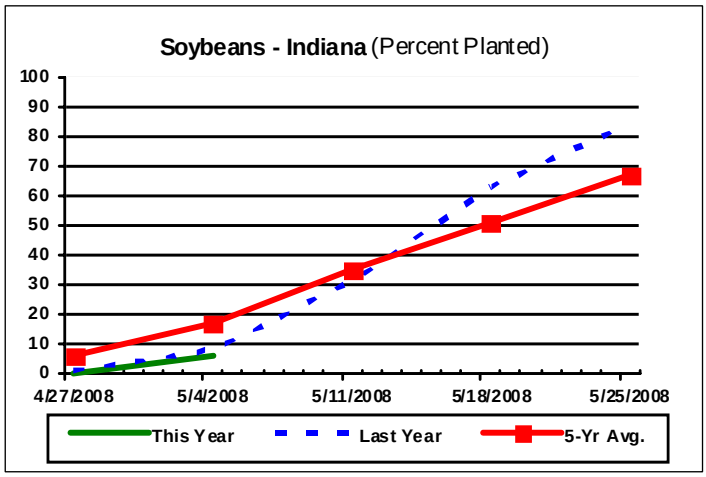
http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Indiana/

Crop Progress





Other Agricultural Comments And News

High Commodity Prices and IPM or Because We Can Afford It, Should We?

- Misconceptions about insects, their damage, and certainly their control abound.
- High fuel prices don't justify combining pesticide applications.
- Economic thresholds are based on more than crop price.
- Kill it, kill it again!

Bob Nielsen's article "A Recipe for Crappy Stands of Corn" in this issue's Agronomy Tips so well describes mistakes made early that affect the crop throughout the season. In a similar tone, some of the far-fetched questions/ideas I have gleaned from producers this past winter about insect pests and control has prompted me to address the following: "after all, corn is selling at $ ____/bushel (you fill in the price) and losing one kernel, much less one plant, per acre just might make the difference!" Sound familiar, good…please read on.

Let me start by saying, it sickens me that a few (certainly not most) predator-like companies/suppliers are feasting on some producer's natural "insect-fear" when it comes to their crop. Thus, 30+ years of tried and proven pest management is thrown out the window, because using their product this year, might prevent the "one-eyed, one-horned, flying purple" corn-plant-eater destruction. Of course, scouting fields to determine pest presence takes time or hiring a consulting firm to monitor acres for the unexpected/occasional pest would cost money. Interesting, for about the same price as that "cure-all" insecticide, fields can be scouted multiple times. Timely scouting, and insecticides if needed, will prevent pest outbreaks from negatively affecting yield, making a difference on the producer's bottom line.

Ignorance of pests/beneficial identification and biology has led to the "shoot first and ask questions later" approach. This has been quite evident with soybean aphid over the last couple years. Simply, fields are getting treated because the neighbors are or it is convenient to include an insecticide with another pesticide being applied, even if it is at the wrong time. Treating and killing a low level of insect pests is one thing, but wiping out the diversity of natural enemies may spur pest outbreaks. One of my favorite quotes to describe the complexity of IPM is from John Muir, famous naturalist, "when one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world." Recognizing pests from other critters, understanding pest biology, and knowing the pest's potential damage will prevent needless insecticide applications. This savings in pesticide and application costs is a direct value, but says nothing for the indirect value to the environment.

The premise of an IPM program is correct identification of and scouting for pests/beneficials, but the cornerstone is the economic threshold. It has been assumed by many that as commodity prices increase, thresholds decrease, e.g., fewer insects, less defoliation, etc. Though thresholds for many insects and crops are dynamic, that is factoring many variables, they are not based on a simple sliding scale. In other words, because the insect/crop/weather interactions are so complex the crop's yield may or may not be negatively impacted when certain numbers of plants/leaves/roots are removed. For example, the threshold of 250 soybean aphids/plant was developed over multiple years and locations, but during a time when the soybean market was ranging $5-6/bushel. However, the threshold variable that changes with the jump in commodity price is not number of aphids, but rather the days before spraying. Simply explained, at 250, the aphid population is anticipated (depending favorable aphid weather) to reach about 700 aphids/plant in 7 days, when economic yield reductions begin. According to the threshold under higher soybean prices, fields should be treated at 250/plant in 3-4 days rather than waiting a week. For a more eloquent explanation coauthored by Kevin Steffey and Mike Gray, University of Illinois extension entomologists, please refer to "Will Economic Thresholds for Making Insect Control Decisions Be Lower in 2008? "<http://www.ipm.uiuc.edu/bulletin/article.php? id=878>, (Issue 1, March 21, 2008) in "the Bulletin."

Insects can only be killed once. There is a disturbing trend for insecticide-coated, Bt-CRW seed to be planted with a soil insecticide. But "after all, corn is selling at $ ____/bushel (you fill in the price) and losing one kernel, much less one plant, per acre just might make the difference!" While you're at it, don't forget to rescue treat for cutworms, armyworms, billbugs, slugs, stalk borers, stink bugs, southern corn leaf beetle, corn borers (Bt-CB corn is only 99.999% effective), aphids, rootworm beetles, grasshoppers, woollybear caterpillars, Japanese beetle, earworms, western bean cutworm just to name a few. Oh wait, that was just the corn insects..let's reload for the soybean crop!

Folks that come to the Pest&Crop on a regular basis to get up-to-date information on pests, their development, and potential impact on our crops makes this effort worthwhile. I have been encouraged throughout the years by your questions, comments, and field updates as situations develop. I know that you're doing the job right. My rant above is directed more to those few that have let higher commodity prices cloud their pest decisions. Thanks to most of you for your continual support of IPM, keep up the good work. Happy Scouting!

John Obermeyer, Department of Entomology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

(Additional Article on Page 4)

Weather Information Table

Week ending Sunday May 4, 2008

Station	Past Week Weather Summary Data							Accumulation				
								April 1, 2008 thru May 4, 2008				
	Air Temperature				Precip.		Avg 4 in Soil	Precipitation			GDD Base 50°F	
	Hi	Lo	Avg	DFN	Total	Days	Temp	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN
Northwest (1)												
Chalmers_5W	73	32	51	-7	0.56	2		2.86	-1.31	12	153	-3
Francesville	73	32	50	-6	0.51	2		2.81	-1.34	12	153	+29
Valparaiso_AP_I	75	30	51	-5	0.31	2		2.43	-2.06	10	171	+56
Wanatah	75	27	48	-6	0.61	3	53	3.82	-0.47	15	146	+55
Winamac	74	31	51	-6	0.66	3	54	3.00	-1.15	13	159	+35
North Central (2)												
Plymouth	76	31	51	-7	1.45	2		4.14	-0.24	12	163	+29
South_Bend	75	27	50	-5	0.61	4		3.21	-1.03	14	188	+84
Young_America	74	32	52	-5	1.52	2		3.85	-0.11	12	168	+48
Northeast (3)												
Columbia_City	76	30	51	-4	0.76	3	50	3.45	-0.62	12	160	+70
Fort_Wayne	78	29	54	-1	0.57	2		2.77	-1.05	11	189	+78
West Central (4)												
Greencastle	71	35	52	-7	1.32	4		4.66	+0.33	11	156	-20
Perrysville	72	34	52	-5	0.43	2	56	3.34	-1.06	11	174	+27
Spencer_Ag	72	34	52	-5	0.94	2		3.78	-0.84	10	173	+21
Terre_Haute_AFB	72	35	55	-4	0.70	2		2.79	-1.69	8	209	+32
W_Lafayette_6NW	74	32	52	-5	0.72	3	52	3.41	-0.84	15	175	+50
Central (5)												
Eagle_Creek_AP	71	35	55	-4	1.36	3		3.48	-0.74	12	229	+63
Greenfield	74	34	54	-4	1.97	4		4.23	-0.38	16	178	+38
Indianapolis_AP	72	37	56	-3	0.44	3		2.50	-1.72	12	245	+79
Indianapolis_SE	72	35	53	-6	0.62	3		2.30	-2.05	13	183	+30
Tipton_Ag	74	33	52	-4	0.71	3	57	3.47	-0.95	14	161	+58
East Central (6)												
Farmland	77	33	53	-3	0.88	3	58	3.35	-0.71	14	155	+58
New_Castle	76	32	53	-3	0.58	3		3.65	-1.01	14	160	+58
Southwest (7)												
Evansville	76	37	58	-3	0.88	2		6.84	+2.21	11	279	+17
Freelandville	73	37	55	-5	0.31	2		4.54	+0.02	12	218	+23
Shoals_8S	75	32	55	-4	0.95	2		7.21	+2.45	13	199	+8
Stendal	76	36	56	-4	0.96	2		8.11	+3.00	14	264	+40
Vincennes_5NE	74	36	56	-4	0.41	2	62	4.18	-0.34	10	245	+50
South Central (8)												
Leavenworth	78	36	57	-2	2.58	5		8.18	+2.99	19	256	+59
Oolitic	73	35	54	-4	1.05	3	55	4.56	-0.05	15	193	+26
Tell_City	78	40	59	-3	2.96	3		8.85	+3.41	15	279	+44
Southeast (9)												
Brookville	78	35	55	-2	1.32	4		4.55	+0.11	16	200	+69
Greensburg	76	36	55	-3	0.94	4		4.04	-0.65	15	222	+67
Scottsburg	76	36	56	-4	1.16	4		4.76	+0.02	15	249	+53

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
GDD = Growing Degree Days.
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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Nitrogen Loss Conditions Approaching

Farmers that applied anhydrous ammonia (AA) in the fall for corn in northern Indiana are wondering how much nitrogen (N) they may have lost due to the heavy rains and flooding that occurred over winter. Previous research has shown that N loss from fall-applied AA can range from 0 to 50%. The amount of loss depends on how much of the fertilizer ammonium has been converted to nitrate prior to saturated soil conditions. The conversion to nitrate is dependent on soil temperature and moisture conditions since application, whether or not a nitrification inhibitor was used, and soil drainage properties. Since monitoring of N loss in the field is prohibitively expensive, the best we can usually do is estimate the potential for loss from soil temperature and rainfall records. From this type of analysis we concluded that little N loss has likely occurred to date from AA that was applied in northern Indiana in the last week of October or later. Although the news is good now, it is too early to celebrate because we are just entering the time where N loss typically occurs.

The conversion of ammonium to nitrate increases with increasing temperature, requiring 8 weeks at 45 ^{o}F but only a couple of weeks at 60 ^{o}F. Soils just began exceeding 50^{o} F in the Lafayette and Muncie areas around April 1st and in the Valparaiso and Fort Wayne areas about April 10th. The last couple of warm days have resulted in soil temperatures nearing 60 ^{o}F. With continued warm temperatures most of the fall or spring-applied N (without a nitrification inhibitor) will soon be in the nitrate form. This nitrate-N will be susceptible to leaching in sandy soils or denitrification in poorly-drained soils if rainfall is excessive. So if you have already applied your nitrogen, rainfall during the next four to six weeks will determine how much is lost.

If nitrogen has not yet been applied, typically the best way to protect it from loss is to sidedress either AA or 28% urea-ammonium-nitrate. The most efficient preplant application is AA with a nitrification inhibitor. Polymer-coated and other slow-release nitrogen fertilizers have begun gaining commercial acceptance in the last few years but research with these products to establish their value relative to more traditional fertilizer practices is just beginning. If you are interested in these new products it would be wise to conduct some trials on your farm to test their performance.

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