

Corn Test Weight and Dry Down

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HEC Newsletter

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With the recent frosts that we had last week and the possibility of a hard freeze the end of the week there are some questions about the stage of the corn and whether we have made it to a good test weight point or not. Well, I have some good news and bad news.

The good news: We had an extremely warm September which has helped the corn get to maturity. According to NDAWN for the month of September, the Hillsboro station had 297 more GDU's than normal and 138 more than 2008. In all, we accumulated 440 GDU's in the month of September. That is huge! At this point in time, HEC Agronomists believe that there are some fields out there that have reached maturity and are currently drying down! (For your information: The Hillsboro station has accumulated 1989 GDU's between 5/20/09 and 10/5/09; 2161 would be "Normal" for that time frame)

The bad news: Not all the corn fields have reached maturity and they may not reach maturity before cold temperatures kill the corn. Last week, there was a spotty frost in this area that did damage some of the corn (some was at maturity and some was not). The predicted temperatures for the end of this week are quite cold and there is a possibility that these temps will finish off the corn. At this point in time, there is the possibility of some lighter corn out there.

Because of this there have been questions about field drying time at different temperature and there have also been some questions about the test weight outcome. I found an article from the University of Minnesota about this and thought it looked interesting. Please remember that it is extremely difficult to pinpoint an exact test weight and time for field dry down for a given field because of environmental conditions (planting conditions, rain amounts, etc) and hybrid variability.

To see the article please click on the link below. This article is by Jeff Coulter, Extension Corn Agronomist, University of Minnesota Extension, from September 11, 2008.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/cropnews/2008/08MNCN26.html>