Field Crop Newsletter
March 2009

CORN

PLANTING TIPS
Corn planting time is rapidly approaching. The things that you do at planting will, to a large extent, determine the yield potential of the crop.

Plant on Time
Corn should be planted when soil temperatures reach 55 degrees at a 2-inch depth and the weather forecast shows a good chance of warm temperatures over the next few days. In the NC Coastal Plain soils, temperatures normally exceed 55 degrees for at least 24 hours between the dates of March 20th-25th.

Plant the Appropriate Population
Appropriate plant populations vary by soil type and by hybrid selection. Plant populations have a strong influence on corn yields. Research has shown that optimum final plant stands for our area are around 30,000 plants per acre. Be sure to match your population to your soil type and hybrid. If you have productive soils, then consider at least adding an increase of 10 to 15% to your current population in a field or two and see what kind of results you get. The following table shows plant spacings for various populations on both 30 and 38 inch rows. It is likely that you will gain greater benefits from the higher populations on narrower row spacings. However, there are also yield benefits on wide rows. Please consider increasing your plant populations for 2009.

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<th>In-Row Spacing (inches)</th>
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**Hessian Fly**
If you look hard enough for Hessian fly you will almost ALWAYS find some. At this time, the Hessian fly is in the pupal (resting) stage. The pupa is a dark brown case that resembles flax seed. If present, the pupa will be found between the sheath and the stem near the base of the wheat plant. You should be scouting your fields now to determine whether or not your wheat field is infested.

Dr. John Van Duyn, NCSU Extension Entomologist, has suggested a pupa threshold of 1.) 10% infested plants when there are “friendly conditions” and 2.) 20% infested plants when there are no “friendly conditions.” “Friendly conditions” include 1 or more of the following: A Hessian fly susceptible wheat variety, no Gaucho or Cruiser seed treatment, wheat/wheat rotation (especially no-till), wheat emerged before November, and wheat fields planted near year’s wheat fields.

If a spring infestation of Hessian fly is present in your wheat field, tillering will be poor, plants will look yellow and unthrifty, have small heads, will be noticeably shorter, and lodging will be evident. If any of these symptoms are present and you have gone out and found Hessian fly pupa or larvae, it might benefit you to apply an insecticide (like Warrior). In the spring, apply an insecticide as the pupa hatch and flies emerge. If using Warrior, the recommended application rate is 2.6 to 3.8 ounces acre. Use the high rate for heavy infestation.

**NCGA CORN YIELD CONTEST**
Congratulations go out to Donnie Riggs of Riggs Farm in Maysville! Donnie won first place in the Ridge Till irrigated division of the 2008 National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) Corn Yield Contest. He won with Pioneer brand hybrid 33M57, which yielded 157.47 bushels per acre.

**BOOKS AVAILABLE ALL FIELD CROPS**
The following resources are available at the Onslow County Cooperative Extension Service, Crop Production Services in Maysville, and Shaw Farm Supply in Richlands. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy.
- 2009 Flue-Cured Tobacco Information
- 2009 Cotton Information
- 2008 Small Grain Performance
- 2008 NC Measured Crop Performance – Corn and Corn Silage
- 2008 NC Measured Crop Performance – Cotton and Soybean

**TOBACCO GREENHOUSE – WATER SAMPLES**
It is not too late to collect a water sample for your tobacco greenhouse. Water samples can be collected from the water source or directly from the float system in the greenhouse. Samples should be collected in a plastic bottle. A clean 16 to 20 ounce drink bottle works fine; but be sure to thoroughly rinse it out. Samples can be delivered to the Onslow County Extension Office. The samples are sent out to the NCDA & CS every Thursday. The NCDA & CS can analyze water samples for $5.00 and results can be obtained in one week or less.
NO PAPER SOIL-TEST REPORTS

Due to budget cuts, the Agronomic Division of the NDCA & CS is strongly encouraging its clients to choose online reports for soil tests and other agronomic services instead of receiving paper copies in the mail.

Agronomic reports are available electronically in a searchable database through the division’s Web site, www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/. Report cover sheets and other explanatory notes are also available online. Online reports can be obtained more quickly than mailed copies.

To opt out of receiving a paper report in the mail, simply check the “Do Not Send a Report” box near the center of the page on the sample-information form. If the form doesn’t contain a box, please write a note in the margin requesting not to receive a mailed report.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pesticide Safety (2 hours V)
Tuesday, March 10th from 5pm - 7pm

Pesticide Classes (2 hours X)
Wednesday, March 18th from 9am - 11am
Tuesday, March 31st from 5pm - 7pm

SPOTLIGHT

Extension Volunteers Recognized
The annual Onslow County Agricultural Awards Banquet was held on February 10th, at the Onslow Multipurpose Complex. Recognition was given to the various groups of volunteers that give of themselves to support and expand the work of the NC Cooperative Extension Service here in Onslow County. During 2008, Onslow County Master Gardeners volunteered 3,300 hours of service to local citizens.

Special recognition was also given to Willie Wooldridge, Lea Crews and John Burns for their 500 hours of volunteer time and Brian Wheat was also recognized for 1500 hours of volunteer time as Master Gardeners.

Special recognition was also given to Willie Wooldridge, who was named the 2008 Master Gardener Volunteer of the Year for his devotion to increasing the knowledge level of other master gardeners and the public.

Several local farmers received awards for crop production contests:
Corn Yield Champion: Barry Shepard with Dekalb 69-44, 226.02 bushels per acre. Runner-up: Jack and George Pierce with 162.91 bushels per acre, Pioneer 33M57.

Wheat Yield Champion: Winzell Taylor, Jr. with 65.4 bushels per acre, Pioneer.

The Onslow County Agricultural Hall of Fame once, as either a recipient of the Master Farmer Award or the James R. Strickland Service to Agriculture Award. This year’s inductee was for the Master Farmer Award and that inductee was Mr. Jack Aman.

On January 27th 4-H recognized Leona Walton as the 4-H Volunteer Leader of the year. Along with Mrs. Walton all 4-H volunteers were thanked and recognized for the years of service at the annual 4-H
Volunteer Leaders Banquet. The theme this year was “4-H Celebrating 100 Years.”

The Onslow County Extension and Community Association (ECA) celebrated their 2008 achievements on February 24th. The speaker for the event was Mrs. Chase Padgett, Retired Home Economist Agent for the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. The event started off with a memorial to ECA members that had passed away since the last Achievement Day.

Several members were recognized for special awards. They are as follows:

**Perfect Attendance** – 13 members were recognized for reading a total of 115 books and submitting book reports of all books read. **Ruth Clifton** was recognized for reading a total of 50 books.

**Cofer Leader Program Award** – **Annie Lane** received this award for a lesson she presented to her club. All clubs voted on a member that had presented information during the year. Judges then picked the overall winner from reports presented to them. All clubs voted on a member that had presented information during the year. Judges then picked the overall winner from reports presented to them.

**Most Outstanding Club Member** – The following members were recognized after being voted on by the club members as the club’s outstanding member: **Barbara Crossman** – Harmony; **Mary Sabourin** – Jacksonville; **Faye Gould** – Meadow View and **Barbara Nichols** - Sneads Ferry.

**Most Outstanding Club** – This award is voted on by judges after seeing all the work done by a club’s members. This year’s award was presented to the **Harmony Club**.

**Extension and Community Associate of the Year** – This award is given to an outstanding member that goes above and beyond the call of duty. This year’s award was presented to **Ida McNamara**.

Other awards were given by were not available at the time of this release. For more information regarding the Extension and Community Association please call Peggie Garner at 455-5873.

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