

McNay, Farm and Weather Summary

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McNay Memorial Research
and Demonstration Farm

Farm Comments

Field Days and Tours: Sixteen events were held. A total of 754 people attended field days and visited the farm. A continuing event at the farm is the annual field day with the area schools. This year we had approximately 400 students visit the farm.

New Projects: Pasture renovation study with Ken Moore and Dow Agro Sciences.

A continuing project has one change. K. Delate's organic plots have been changed from an oats, corn, soybean rotation to a triticale, popcorn, Adzuki bean rotation. Plans are to look at four different popcorn varieties and four populations for the Adzuki beans.

Livestock: Plans have begun for the sale of the McNay cowherd and transfer of the Rhodes Angus herd to McNay during the fall of 2004. Renovations are underway to improve the facilities for the livestock operation.

Crop Season Comments

Corn planting started April 28 and was completed May 21. Harvest began August 20 and was completed October 20 with an average yield of 115 bushels/acre.

Soybean planting started May 21 and was completed May 29. Harvest began September 25 and was completed October 13 with an average yield of 32 bushels/acre.

Weather Comments

Winter: A cooler and drier season than normal allowed winter grazing for the cowherd.

February's weather was good for lambing and not cold enough to cause problems. The drier weather helped prevent problems with pneumonia.

Spring 2003: Early spring was dry—planting started mid-April but rain delayed planting for 3 weeks.

Summer 2003: Slightly drier than normal with a very hot late August. The combination of heat, dryness, and aphids caused lower soybean yields. The corn also was affected, but not quite as severely.

Fall 2003: The hot August weather dried corn so quickly that the silage harvest was earlier than normal. Fall rains replenished the dry soil profile but did not delay harvest.

Table 1. McNay Research and Demonstration Farm, Chariton, IA, monthly rainfall and average temperatures for 2003.

| Month | Rainfall (inches) | | Temperature (°F) | | Days 90° or above |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | 2003 | Deviation from normal | 2003 | Deviation from normal | |
| March | 0.29 | -1.96 | 36 | -1 | 0 |
| April | 3.40 | -0.16 | 50 | -1 | 0 |
| May | 2.92 | -1.54 | 57 | -4 | 0 |
| June | 4.54 | -.24 | 66 | -4 | 1 |
| July | 2.77 | -1.59 | 74 | -1 | 3 |
| August | 1.45 | -2.36 | 76 | 3 | 11 |
| September | 6.08 | 1.78 | 61 | -3 | 0 |
| October | <u>4.91</u> | <u>2.22</u> | 53 | 0 | |
| Totals | 26.36 | -3.85 | | | 15 |