

Farm and Weather Summary

David Rueber, farm superintendent

Farm Comments

Field Days and Tours. Two field day events were held. A total of 988 people visited the farm in 2004.

New Projects. Corn planting rates.

Crop Season Comments

Corn planting started April 16 and was completed May 5. Harvest began October 11 and was completed October 28 with average yields of 170–205 bushels/acre.

Soybean planting started May 4 and was completed May 12. Harvest began September 26 and was completed October 6 with average yields of 45–60 bushels/acre, depending on how well the site was drained.

Developments. A corncrib trellis was added near the demonstration garden.

Weather Comments

Winter 2003–2004. Winter temperatures during December, January, and February were near normal. Two snowstorms in early February left over 13.5 in. of snow. March was the third warmest and fourth wettest on record at the farm. The ground was frost free by the middle of March—normal conditions.

Spring. Warm, dry weather during April and the first two-thirds of May allowed the crops to be planted in a timely manner. The first near miss was a light frost on May 15, which killed the frost-sensitive garden plants, but froze only

exposed corn leaves leaving the growing tip unharmed. Soybeans were small and escaped any frost damage. The second near miss was during the last part of May when 7.72 in. of rain fell, stunting corn plants, especially in poorly drained areas and where the previous crop was corn. June continued the wet trend. Some low areas were replanted twice.

Summer. Although August was the fourth coolest, September was the second warmest recorded on the farm. The third near miss was below-normal temperatures in June, July, and August, which slowed corn development. Fortunately, the lack of an early frost allowed the crops to mature during the warm September temperatures. The fourth near miss was an August 26 hailstorm that left hailstones as large as 3 in. in diameter in Kanawha, damaging buildings on the farm, but doing only minor damage to the crops. With the cool temperatures and abundant rain, hay making was difficult, but the yields were still above average.

Fall. On the morning of October 2, the temperature fell to 27°F, ending the growing season. Warm, dry weather allowed harvesting and fieldwork to be completed by November 17. The ground was frozen to a depth of 8 in. on December 15, about two weeks later than normal.

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Table 1. Northern Research and Demonstration Farm, Kanawha, IA, monthly rainfall and average temperatures for 2004.

Month	Rainfall (inches)		Temperature (°F)		Days 90° or above
	2004	Deviation from normal	2004	Deviation from normal	
March	3.70	1.71	40.7	6.4	0
April	2.91	-0.33	51.6	3.6	0
May	8.25	4.42	61.1	0.6	0
June	6.10	1.29	67.6	-2.3	3
July	4.11	0.16	70.8	-2.1	0
August	2.62	-1.38	66.3	-4.2	1
September	2.79	-0.41	67.9	5.1	0
October	<u>1.54</u>	<u>-0.66</u>	52.4	1.8	<u>0</u>
Totals	32.02	4.8			4