

Farm and Weather Summary, Central Iowa Farms

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Farm Comments

The ISU Central Iowa Farms consist of farmland in Story, Boone, Marshall, and Polk counties. There were 1,930 crop acres farmed by local farmers as custom operators. These acres are used for large-scale research, equipment testing, silage production, and manure application. Small-scale plots covered 63 acres. The student-managed Ag 450 Farm rented 285 acres, of which 103 acres were 50/50 sharecropped. The Ag 450 farm also is hired to perform custom farm work on Central Iowa Farms.

A large tile improvement and installation project was completed at the Dairy Farm's cropland. Tile main and lateral installations were installed in the fall 2007 after the crops were removed and more lateral tile was installed in the spring and summer of 2008. Approximately 74,000 ft of tile has been installed since the farm's purchase in 2007.

The majority of the Rhodes Farm is rented to a private farmer, but the university has retained a portion of the farm for long-term grazing research projects. Approximately 4,000 ft of fence was installed in the west central portion of the farm. Ten crop acres and 15 pasture acres will be better used as a result of the new fence. The fall calving cows from the ISU McNay Research Farm were grazed on the retained portion of the Rhodes Farm. Ninety cows produced 92 live calves. An isolated pharmacorn study was conducted successfully at the Rhodes Farm. The Rhodes Farm also had a corn wireworm study.

A remote sensing project continues on 177 acres south of Ames. A sclerotia study was conducted at the Kelley Farm in a fallow area. A corn physiology study and a corn nitrogen/rootworm interaction study were conducted. A rodent population dispersion study was conducted in the winter. Fall treatments were made in preparation for two on-farm tillage studies.

Crop Season Comments

The growing season was extremely wet and cold. Planting was delayed, crops were lost to ponding, and many farm roads, tiles, and culverts were damaged from flooding.

Corn planting began on May 5 and was completed on May 19. Corn silage yields ranged from 19 to 26 tons/acre at 61 percent to 70 percent moisture. Corn silage was harvested on 315 acres. Corn grain yields ranged from 138 to 213 bushels/acre. Soybean planting began on May 14 and was completed on June 21. An outbreak of soybean aphids required spraying in mid to late July. Yields ranged from 40 to 64 bushels/acre. Fall harvesting began on September 28 and was completed on November 28. The corn and soybean yield ranges were similar to the prior year, however the average was lower due to ponds and flooding.

Weather Comments

The Ag Engineering and Agronomy Farm weather summary (Table 1, page 3) represents the weather data for all of the farms in central Iowa covered by this report.