

Delayed corn planting in the Northern Corn Belt

Overview

When corn planting is delayed due to cloudy, wet weather and poor field conditions, you can still achieve reasonable yield results by adjusting your hybrid selection and managing cropping activities with later planting dates.

What you should know

- In the Northern Corn Belt, corn planting should be the priority after May 1. Some rules of thumb include:
 - Change from the fullest adapted maturities to a midseason hybrid after May 15.
 - Change from midseason-adapted hybrid to short-season hybrid after May 25.
 - Change from a short-season hybrid to corn alternative after June 5.
- Prioritize planting. Remember that nitrogen can be sidedressed up to the eight-leaf stage and postemergence herbicides can be substituted for preplant and/or preemergence herbicides and still provide effective weed control.

Action steps

1. **Determine recommended maturities:** Table 1 shows maturities in relation to Northern Corn Belt frost dates.
2. **Prioritize planting by hybrid:** Plant the fullest-season, latest-flowering hybrids first. Plant early-flowering, short-season hybrids last.
3. **Do not work wet soils:** Wet soils can become compacted, reducing their ability to hold and conduct water, nutrients and air necessary for root activity.
4. **Plant for a uniform stand:** If conditions indicate a prolonged cool, wet period after planting, increase planting populations 5 to 10 percent to compensate for potential emergence problems and seedling diseases.

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Table 1. Hybrid Maturity Recommendations for Given Planting and Frost Dates: S. Dakota, S. Minnesota and S. Wisconsin

Planting Date	Expected Frost Date								
	9/10	9/15	9/20	9/25	9/30	10/5	10/10	10/15	10/20
April 25	81	89	95	102	110				
April 30	79	86	93	100	108				
May 5	76	83	91	98	105	115			
May 10	74	80	87	94	102	110			
May 15	70	77	83	90	98	105	115		
May 20		74	78	84	92	99	106	115	
May 25		70	75	78	85	92	99	105	115
May 30			70	75	78	85	90	100	105



30-Second Summary

- If planting is delayed, switch to shorter-season hybrids to maintain yield.
- Look for the right maturities based on potential frost dates.
- Don't be tempted to plant into wet soils to avoid a delay.

NOTES:
