



Planting populations

Overview

Planting corn at the appropriate population can help maximize the crop's yield potential. Specific populations can vary by geography so it is important to consider management practices, ear type, row width and other environmental factors.

What you should know

- Proper planting population partially depends on the ear type of a hybrid. A hybrid with a determinate ear requires higher populations to achieve top yield, whereas a hybrid with a flex ear may produce lower yields when planted at a high population.
- Higher plant populations are preferred in a high-yield environment with a uniform and favorable soil texture. In a low-yield environment with variable soil types, lower plant populations are acceptable.
- More plants per acre does not necessarily maximize yield. Often, true flex-ear-type hybrids that are planted at extremely high populations can result in more plants with barren stalks and shrunken ears. In general, populations should not exceed the capacity of the yield environment. For example, in irrigated fields where moisture is not a limiting factor, the yield environment can handle a higher population compared with areas where rainfall is less predictable.

Action steps

1. **Identify ear style:** Planting populations for hybrids with semi-flex ears tend to vary based on the degree of ear flexibility. Consult technical production information or a trusted agronomic adviser to determine the optimum population for your hybrids.
2. **Factor in row width:** Leaving 4½ inches between plants provides greater opportunity for proper root development, and this spacing is especially critical in high-stress environments.
3. **Consider planting date:** Because early planting dates can put more stress on seedlings, a higher seeding rate may be needed if corn is planted before conditions are ideal.

For more information, contact:



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Ear type and field conditions are two factors to consider when choosing your planting population.



30-Second Summary

- Planting your hybrid at the right population can maximize yield potential.
- Ear type, field conditions and planting date can all impact population decisions.
- Allow adequate space for plants to establish roots, and remember more plants does not necessarily mean more yield.

NOTES:
