

Weather Not A Factor In Long Run Corn Yields

Increases in corn yields in the Corn Belt between 1929 and 1962 are attributable almost entirely to the adoption of hybrid seed, the use of nitrogen fertilizer, and other improved production practices, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

USDA says that while weather affected yields for short periods within the 30-year span, its effect for the entire period was negligible. During that time, bad weather lowered yields by as much as good weather raised yields.

Economists used a weather index to separate the effects of weather and technology on trends in corn yields. Adjusting yields with the weather index shows what the level of

yields would have been if weather had been normal in each year.

Corn yields moved up each time Corn Belt farmers began using a new technique. When the technique became widespread, yields hit a plateau until the next innovation started to make an impact.

The adoption of hybrid seed pushed yields up steadily from 1933 until 1948, when 99 percent of the corn planted by Corn Belt farmers was hybrid. Yields remained on a plateau until the middle 1950's. Increased use of nitrogen fertilizer raised yields to a new plateau by 1956. About 1961 farmers began fertilizing at higher rates and once again yields increased.

In all, Corn Belt yields adjusted for weather rose from 30 to 70 bushels from 1929 to 1962. Hybrid seed accounted for 20 bushels of the increase. Nitrogen fertilizer

caused another 15-bushel rise. The remainder of the increase resulted from higher planting rates and other improved practices.

While raising the average level of corn yields, technological advances have ironed out some of the variations in yields. In years of bad weather yields do not decline proportionately as much as 30 years ago, but in years of good weather they do not increase as much either, the scientists found.

Even greater fertilizer use and higher planting rates are likely to be the major source of future increases in corn yields, it was concluded.

Last year industrial friends of 4-H provided over four million copies of educational publications and other materials to aid 4-H'ers in their projects.

12—Lancaster Farming, Saturday, August 21, 1965

Two Lancaster Girls Among First To Enter NEPPCO Princess Duel

Miss Carol Ann Whitaker, 17, and Miss Sandra Lee High, 19, both of Lancaster, are among the first four young ladies to apply for the annual NEPPCO Poultry Princess contest this year. Entries are being encouraged over the 14-state NEPPCO area.

The top prize in the princess pageant is a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond. In addition the

winner will make numerous public appearances in the coming year. Candidates are judged on the basis of beauty, charm, poise, and personality, and do not necessarily have to be previously associated with the poultry industry. They must be single and between 17 and 23.

The contest will be held at the annual NEPPCO banquet on October 13 at Harrisburg's Holiday Inn Town, and will be a crowning highlight of the NEPPCO Exposition.

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