

Double Row Corn Planting Boosts Silage Yield, Penn State Says

Farmers are hearing a lot this Spring about a double row system of planting corn silage, a method yielding up to 21 percent more silage per acre than yields from single rows in four years of experiments at Penn State University.

This innovation in corn planting arranges the double rows 8 inches apart, with 40 inches from the middle of one double row to the middle of the next double row. Planting rates in the experiments were increased from 25,700 plants to 33,700 plants per acre.

● Cattle Meeting

(Continued from Page 1) animal shows when it fails to react to its environment, when it can no longer tolerate that environment," Guss said.

As the amount of stress an animal shows increases, its resistance to disease decreases proportionally, the veterinarian said.

He pointed out that this is why it is particularly important to buy cattle that look right. "Avoid those animals that appear listless; stand by themselves with head or ears drooping, show signs of rapid or difficult breathing. Such animals may be experiencing shipping fever, or worse," Guss warned.

He described some of the contagious diseases affecting cattle — Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) Bovine Virus Diarrhea (BVD) — particularly

A good general rule, he observed, "is never put breeding and feeding cattle together, the farther apart they are, the better. Either the vaccines, or the infectious diseases themselves, can cause abortion in breeding herds."

He listed stallings as one of the prime suspected carriers of IBR, and recommended vaccination and buying feeder cattle close to home as means of avoiding some of the more prevalent disease problems.

Guss discussed several internal and external parasite problems which are common to this area. He said that cattle brought in from the wild, rough range country in the west seldom are infested with worms, but "it is almost impossible to buy uninfested cattle in or around Pennsylvania," he said.

"It pays to worm new feeders," Guss said, "but not before they are well on-feed. It will take at least three weeks to build up a satisfactory bacterial paunch population, then worm them."

He suggested the least expensive wormer was phenothiazine but it has drawbacks. "It is so unpalatable that you probably won't get them to eat it a second time," Guss said. He mentioned "Thibenzole" as an effective wormer, but said it was relatively expensive — about 30 cents per head.

The veterinarian recommended a shot of a combination of vitamins A, D, and E as a good treatment for ringworm. He also cautioned the cattlemen against feeding antibiotics to mature cattle. "There is no conclusive evidence," Guss said, "of any value at all. Ninety percent of the reported research on this had no proper controls," he concluded.

The winter cattle feeder meetings have become an annual affair in Lancaster County, and according to County Agent M. M. Smith, who organized and moderated the meetings, the extension service will continue this informational approach.

Despite three years of drought at University Park, the 33,700 plants grown in double rows produced 24 tons of silage per acre at 70 percent moisture basis, compared with 21 tons for the same number of plants in single rows.

The findings by John B. Washko, agronomist, and William L. Kjelgaard, agricultural engineer, are featured in the Spring issue of "Science for the Farmer," the quarterly magazine of the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State.

Harvesting the double rows was done efficiently with a corn harvesting machine using a row crop attachment. Pa. hybrid 602A was grown at University Park and Pa. hybrid 820 was planted at Hershey Estates Farms, Hershey.

Prior to planting, a 10-10-10 fertilizer was disked into the soil at the rate of 1200 pounds per acre. Starter fertilizer was applied in a band midway between the double rows, at a rate of 300 pounds per acre. Seeding was done with four unit planters. Boosting the plant population to 41,800 plants did no better than the 25,700 plant population.

Grain yields at University Park, like the silage yields, were highest at the 33,700 plant population, averaging 96 and 98 bushels per acre, res-

pectively, for single and double rows.

Weather Forecast

Temperatures are expected to average below normal for the next five days. It will be cool over the weekend, milder Monday and Tuesday, then colder again Wednesday.

Showers are expected Saturday night or Sunday, and again about Wednesday. Total moisture is not expected to exceed 1/4-inch.

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