

Quality Soybean Seed Is Reported in Short Supply

Delmarva soybean growers and seedsmen are faced with a small supply of high-quality seed for this year's crop.

Rain, high humidity and unseasonably warm weather last September and October increased disease problems in soybeans and resulted in damage to many seed lots, according to Dr. William H. Mitchell and Dr. Robert B. Carroll, Extension plant specialists at the University of Delaware.

The problem is widespread and growers are urged to start early in lining up an adequate supply of seed for spring planting.

Germination Tests

In cooperation with the State Seed Testing Laboratory, germination tests were conducted on samples from 72 lots of soybean seed in the University's greenhouse. The lots represented about 50,000 bushels of seed or enough seed to plant nearly 25 per cent of the state's soybean acreage.

Half of the seed in each sample

was treated with a recommended fungicide, while the remaining seed was used in an untreated check. The soybeans were planted at a uniform depth in a sandy-loam soil and germination readings were obtained after nine days.

Mitchell and Carroll point out that the quality of most seed lots tested was improved greatly with the fungicide treatment. Treated seed averaged 76 per cent germination compared to 53.5 per cent for the untreated soybeans—an increase of 22.5 per cent.

But seed appearance was a poor indicator of quality, Mitchell adds. Some of the best looking seed lots had the lowest rate of germination.

Pod and stem blight had an obvious effect on germination. Purple stain, on the other hand, caused little damage to seed quality.

Some crop specialists are predicting a substantial increase in the number of soybean acres planted on Delmarva in 1972.

Many growers, however, will be planting seed that normally would be considered substandard. Mitchell offers the following suggestions for growers:

1. Plant certified seed.
2. Treat seed with a fungicide. Growers can use either a slurry or seed box treatment.
3. Have all seed tested for germination.

4. Prepare a good seedbed before planting.

5. Wait until the soil temperature reaches at least 65 degrees F. before planting. For most growers this may mean delaying planting until the last week in May.

6. If the soil is dry, wait for a rain. And, avoid planting seed deeper than 1½ inches.

7. Use 10 per cent more seed than recommended.

8. If crusting occurs after planting, use a rotary hoe to loosen the soil.

9. Use herbicides carefully. Although herbicides are important for good weed control, improperly used they can cause costly damage to young seedlings.

Weaver Will Expand Frozen Fried Chicken Operation

Victor F. Weaver, Inc. recently announced plans to increase its prepared foods production by opening an additional frozen fried chicken operation at the company's New Holland facility.

The decision to open an additional shift, scheduled to begin March 6, will create 60 new jobs.

Weaver, a national leader of prepared poultry products, initially began production of its frozen fried chicken line seven years ago. It was the first company to successfully market such a product on a retail sales level.

Currently, the company is conducting an intensive advertising-marketing campaign throughout the eastern United States west to the Mississippi River. The program is aimed at promoting chicken during what is usually recognized as a seasonally slow sales period. The advertising campaign has reversed this trend and created wide spread demand for frozen fried chicken.

According to a company spokesman, "The additional Frozen Fried Chicken Operation, tentatively scheduled to begin operation March 6, will operate on a nine hour shift four nights per week."

Weaver is one of the 10 largest employers in Lancaster County and the largest independent frozen fried chicken producer in the nation.

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Central Tractor Organizes

The first meeting of the Central 4-H Tractor Club was held Tuesday, February 1, at Landis Brothers, Inc., Manheim Pike, Lancaster.

The following officers were elected: Darryl Bollinger, president; Dennis Landis, vice president; Dudley Rohrer, secretary; Darwin Nissley, treasurer, and Jere Swarr, news reporter.

A film on "Farm Safety" was shown. The next meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. February 8. Those interested are invited to attend.

News Reporter,
Jere Swarr

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