

Includes 208 bu. ear corn yield

State Corn Growers Assn. announces top yields

BY CURT HARLER
HARRISBURG — A yield of 207.9 bushels ear corn was not enough to take the top spot in this year's Master Corn Growers' Association yield contest.

K. Earl Gordon, McConnellsburg, took the top spot, by a narrow margin, with a yield of 208.1 bushels.

The Fulton County farmer edged out Raymond J. Diebold, R 3 Altoona, who produced the 207.9 bushel entry.

Third place in the ear corn division went to Sam Conrad, Warriors Mark. The Huntingdon County farmer produced 189.5 bushels.

In the Shelled Grain Class a yield of 190.7 bushels per acre was sufficient to gain top honors for Milton Hershey School Farms.

The Hershey School Farms yield was certainly no fluke. The yield was measured on a nine acre field. It seems there wasn't time at harvest to play around with the stop and go to measure the required smaller plot.

Close behind in second place was Merle Orner, R 2 Dillsburg, York County, with a production of 188.2 bushels per acre.

Third place went to Harold Ealy, R 2 Sharpville, Mercer County. He produced 173.5 bushels shelled grain per acre.

In the three year average, Jeff Pontius, R 3, Sunbury, Northumberland County, had the top ear corn yield with an average over the past years of 193.8 bushels.

That he should be head and shoulders above the crowd was little surprise. Last year Pontius took the state ear corn title with a record-splitting yield of 239.2 bushels to the acre.

In the shelled grain three year average class, Piwowar Farms, R 6 Uniontown, Fayette County, took top honors with an average 184.8 bushels.

The Piwowar brothers also were helped by a big yield in last year's contest, a 202.2 bushel production which gave them a boost over the second place finisher, Merle Orner.

Penn State Agronomist Joseph McGahen, executive secretary of the Corn Growers Association, said there were 253 farmers who had a yield check.

The state average 138.1 bushels per acre, down seven bushels from last year.

The state-wide result reflects trends McGahen noticed in the state variety plots, he said.

In the Penn State research plots, yields were down a startling 20 bushels per acre. "This is showing up on our good soils, our heavy soils," he said.

Soils that are a bit drouthy in other years were top this year.

"It proves Mother Nature still dictates yield," McGahen said.

He pointed out farmers who said they had good weed control in 1979 averaged 140 bushels per acre.

Those who said weed control was average made 128 bushels, those with poor weed control made 121.6 bushels to the acre.



Al Dugan, representing Milton Hershey Farms in Dauphin County, accepted the 1979 trophy for top shelled corn yield in the state, 190.7 bushels. Presenting trophy is Ag Secretary Penrose Hallowell as Penn State Agronomist Joe McGahen looks on.



Chris and Jim Piwowar, Fayette County, averaged 184.8 bushels over three year's time to take the state three year shelled grain championship. Ag Secretary Penrose Hallowell made the presentation.



A yield of 208.1 bushels ear corn won K. Earl Gordon the state yield championship in the 1979 ear corn class. Presenting the trophy is Penrose Hallowell, State Agriculture Secretary.

Another interesting observation was farmers who used both commercial fertilizer and manure averaged 141.9 bushels corn to the acre.

Those who used only commercial fertilizer realized yields of only 134.4 bushels.

Corn costs are likely to be up some more, McGahen told farmers.

While the average cost per acre corn, excluding drying and storing, was \$180 in 1978 it rose to \$207 in 1979. McGahen said he predicts similar increases in cost in the coming season.

How top corn growers made their yields

HARRISBURG — It was no mere fluke that won Earl Gordon and the Hershey School Farms the top yield trophies in the 1979 Master Corn Growers Association contest.

Gordon, of McConnellsburg, Fulton County, used Pioneer 3184 to produce a yield of 208.1 bushels shelled corn.

Hershey School made its yield of 190.7 bushels shelled corn with the same hybrid.

There were several other similarities between the two farms, although Gordon grows 100 acres of corn while the Hershey School had 2300 acres in field corn last year.

Both programs were conventional corn, both kept the soil sweet with lime, both

applied a healthy dose of manure on their land, both were planting their crop in Hagerstown Class I soils.

Gordon planted his crop in 38 inch rows, 6.9 inches between plants in the row.

Plant population was 23,916 plants per acre at harvest.

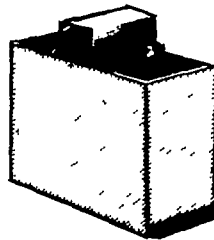
The field previously had

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Master Corn Growers Association elected three new directors at their Monday annual meeting.

Among them were Joseph Hartle, Centre County dairy farmer; John Smith, York County Extension Director; and John Swartz, a commercial representative with PAG seed corn.

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