

Local Pioneers told seed corn supply down

BY SHEILA MILLER
TIPTON, Ind. — "Seed corn production is a high risk business," said Floyd Collins, president of the Eastern Division of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. while addressing a group of several hundred farmers and salesmen here on Tuesday.

Pioneer, one of the leading producers of seed corn in the nation, has felt the effects of this Summer's extremes in weather, too.

The corn that is being harvested now shows the effects of too much rain in the beginning of June (12 inches fell in 24 hours leaving water standing in fields for days) and then a drought at the time of pollination.

Driving past fields of seed corn production, the visitors viewed acres and acres of short, yellow stalks — far from being high as an elephants eye. And at the Pioneer headquarters, the corn being dumped into bins showed signs of stress.

Robert Wichmann, executive vice-president of the company told the group representing sales personnel

and customers from the Eastern States from Kentucky to New England that the 1981 supply of seed corn would be down from previous years. He noted the yield of sensitive inbred lines had been reduced 15 percent more than estimated by the Federal government analysts.

Wichmann did note, however, that there would be an adequate supply of the short season variety seed corn. As a matter of fact, he told the sales personnel that these particular varieties were in greater supply than in 1979.

The more popular long season varieties that are in shorter supply will be salvaged somewhat by last year's carry over supply, he noted.

Along with predictions on the effects of the rains and lack of rains on the seed corn harvest, the visitors were given a tour of the Tipton research facility and plant.

They walked through test plots and demonstration plots of the various varieties, and saw first hand the effects of diseases and insects on varieties that

do not have resistance bred into their line.

The Indiana corn producers said they have not yet felt the sting of Goss's disease that has broken out in Illinois. They commented their worst problems come from Southern blight and anthracnose. And the corn borer has done a lot of damage in fields that have been planted to corn for the past 35 years, said a spokesman.

The tour included a trip through the processing buildings where the visitors learned how Pioneer sizes their seed. Climbing to the top of the roof, the visitors peered down into the storage bins where some of this year's varieties were already in the process of drying down.

Entering still another building, they saw the mechanics installed to handle the bagging of the seed corn. And the last step of the tour was to visit the cold storage where they saw skids of corn ready to ship to Italy and Greece (under the name of Regina rather than 3369A).

Some of the group visited

the research farm where Mark Iwig and John Hoffbeck discussed the ongoing research at Pioneer and the current work in developing varieties for maximum production and disease resistance.

Dr. Hoffbeck explained that for every variety put on the market by Pioneer,

anywhere from 1000 to 10,000 experimental varieties were thrown out. He explained that it takes 15 to 20 years before a variety is tested and available for farmers to plant.

Dr. Iwig echoed his counterpart's comments and said that the varieties he is presently working on in

wheat research are projected to be on the market in 1995.

Area farmers taking part in the tour included: John Weidman, Regional Sales Manager of the Eastern Division, Mount Joy; Tim Markovits, District Sales

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Pennsylvania farmers and salesmen inspect the test plots at Pioneer's headquarters in Tipton, Indiana.



Looking down, down, down into the deep grain dryer bin are David Coble, R1 Hershey; Thomas Mowrer, R1 Spring City; Marvin Nissley, R1 Mount Joy; and Scott Osborne, R2 Peach Bottom.



District Sales Manager Tim Markovits, center, points out the effects of too much and too little rain on seed corn parent stock to Henry Budnt, Lebanon, N.J. and Edward Bilyk, R1 Belvidere, N.J., right.

N.Y. woman is Number One in Pioneer's sales

TIPTON, Ind. — Frances Pogroszewski was one of several hundred sales people who hopped on board jet airplane traveling here to take part in a tour of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.'s Eastern Division headquarters.

Frances has the distinction of being the only woman sales person for the seed company in the East and perhaps in the nation, according to her District Sales Manager Donald Martun.

Frances hails from Hilton, Montgomery County, New York where she was born and raised.

How did she become a Pioneer sales woman?

As she explains it, her involvement in the seed sales business was a gradual one. She had always helped her husband, Stanley, with

his dealership — answering the telephone, keeping the books, taking orders, she said.

About seven years ago, however, Stanley decided to get out of the dairy business and sold his cows in order to go to work in a bank, she recalled. As a result, he didn't have much time to sell corn and the sales began to drop off.

"We were missing out on all the nice premiums that Pioneer gives sales personnel for meeting their goals," mused Frances. After two years of dropping corn sales and no premiums, she said, she decided to start selling.

During the twenty odd years that Stan had been actively involved in selling Pioneer corn, Frances had accompanied him to many of

the sales meetings. By the time she assumed the sales responsibilities for their area, Frances said she was already familiar with the best varieties for the local farmers to plant.

"At first the farmers called and wanted to talk to Stan. Now they're calling and sending me the checks," she said with pride.

Frances pointed out she does not have the dealership in her name as yet. But, she added, her district manager has informed her that she should have it in the near future.

What's the hardest part about being a sales woman for Pioneer?

Frances smiled and said selling was the easiest part — collecting the money was the hardest part.

As far as what corn to recommend, Frances said

she finds out what's best as their sales meetings. However, there are basically only four varieties that have a short enough growing season for their part of New York, she pointed out.

The most frustrating part of her job, she said, is when she sells a farmer a new variety of corn to try and compare, and when she returns to find out how it performed the farmer can't remember where it was planted.

The ex-school teacher has done well in the past five years, meeting her goals and winning premiums. The only problem is that all of the watches presented as premiums are unfortunately made for a man.

"Oh well," she sighed, "They make great gifts for my husband and kids."



Frances Pogroszewski, along with several hundred sales people from Pennsylvania and other Eastern states, toured the Pioneer research facilities and headquarters at Tipton, Indiana on Tuesday.