

Top Md. soybean yield tops 68 bu.

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Essex and Union soybeans, planted in narrow rows, came through a generally hot, dry summer to make top yields for many Eastern Shore farmers in the 1983 official Maryland soybean yield contest.

Top producers in the statewide soybean yield contest were honored Feb. 28 during the seventy-seventh annual meeting of the Maryland Crop Improvement Association. Their achievements compared well with those of the previous year, when growing conditions were more favorable in most locations.

For the fourth time in the last five years, the championship plaque went to a Talbot county farming operation, S & G Farms, operated by J. Raymond Shortall and William Gambrell in the Miles River Neck area northwest of Easton.

Their winning yield of 68.2 bushels per acre was achieved with double-cropped Essex soybeans planted in 15-inch rows. It was 23 bushels per acre better than their recorded yield for the 1982 contest and only slightly below last year's winning state yield of 69.4 set by George C. Towers of Denton on his Talbot county farming operation.

Besides being over-all Maryland soybean champion for 1983, the S & G Farms entry was named state winner in the non-irrigated and no-tillage categories. The farm operators are brothers-in-law.

About 12 miles north, J. Tilghman Bishop of Carmichael (Queen Annes county) also had a good year for soybeans. He planted the Jacques J-13 variety in 19-inch rows to achieve 66.89 bushels per acre. This mark qualified for runnerup honors in the over-all state soybean yield contest.

At the lower end of the Eastern Shore, some Somerset county soybean growers were having a good year, too.

Ted Smith of Princess Anne placed third over-all with a yield of 66.4 bushels per acre. He had planted full-season Union soybeans in 7-inch rows. Incidentally, Smith won the state contest for 1981 with an almost identical yield of 66.5 bushels per acre. That mark was set with full-season Essex soybeans in the non-irrigated category.

Fourth-place honors for the 1983 contest went to James G. Saathoff of Ridgely (Caroline county) with a yield of 64.4 bushels of Essex soybeans per acre. Saathoff was honored as state winner in both the irrigated and irrigated no-till categories. He was also the 1982 state winner for irrigated no-till soybeans.

Back in Talbot county, Paul L. Shortall, Jr., placed fifth in the state soybean contest with a yield of 61.6 bushels per acre. Shortall operates a grain and hog farm about two miles east of Easton. He is a brother and brother-in-law of the S & G Farms operators. Like

them, he had planted double-cropped Essex soybeans in 15-inch rows.

Sixth through tenth placings in the official 1983 state soybean yield contest were as follows:

6. William S. Councill of Goldsboro (Caroline county), 61.4 bushels per acre with Essex soybeans, irrigated no-till, double-cropped;

7. Wesley R. Brown of Easton (Talbot county), 59.9 bushels per acre with Asgrow soybeans in 18-inch rows, no-till, double-cropped;

8. Arthur W. Lankford, Jr., of Pocomoke City (Somerset county), 59.8 bushels per acre with Union soybeans in 7-inch rows, double-cropped;

9. Gustav A. Schlag of Wittman (Talbot county), 59.5 bushels per acre with full-season Essex soybeans in 38-inch rows, conventional tillage;

10. John V. Hartman of Westover (Somerset county), 57.3 bushels per acre with full-season Essex soybeans in 18-inch rows.

Schlag and Brown had placed second and third, respectively, in the 1982 state soybean yield contest. Lankford was fifth in 1982 and was state winner that year for irrigated soybeans grown under minimum or conventional tillage. He was the irrigated no-till winner for soybean production in the 1981 state contest.

Average yield for the top 10 entries in the 1983 Maryland soybean yield contest was 62.54 bushels per acre. Except for the previous year's all-time record of 64.67, this was the highest "top 10" average in the history of the contest.

By comparison, the top 10 growers in the 1980 official soybean contest has an average yield of 54.0 bushels per acre. In that year, the over-all state yield average for soybeans had fallen to 24 bushels per acre because of a hot, dry summer.

The over-all state average for 1983 was 25 bushels per acre, according to the Maryland-Delaware Crop Reporting Service. This compared with a statewide average of 29 bushels per acre in 1982.

For Delaware, the situation was exactly reversed, thanks to near-

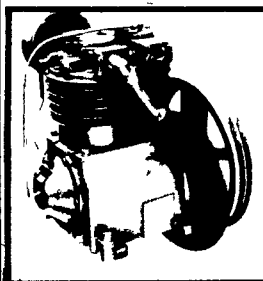
normal rainfall during the June 23-Sept. 11 period last summer in lower Delaware. Across the state line in Maryland, upper Caroline county was also experiencing near-normal rainfall at the time - while most of the rest of the state was experiencing drought or near-drought conditions.

Maryland's yield record for soybeans - 69.8 bushels per acre - was set in 1976 by Dale Reagan of Federalsburg (Caroline county) with the irrigated Williams variety.

The official statewide corn and soybean yield contests have been conducted each year since 1952 as part of the crop improvement program of the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service. Yield measurements are supervised by Extension agricultural agents in participating counties.



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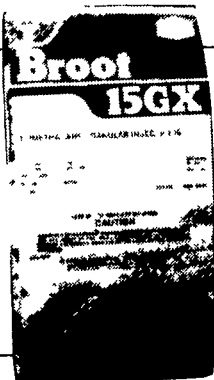
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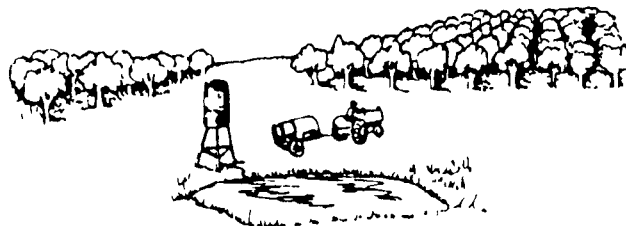
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