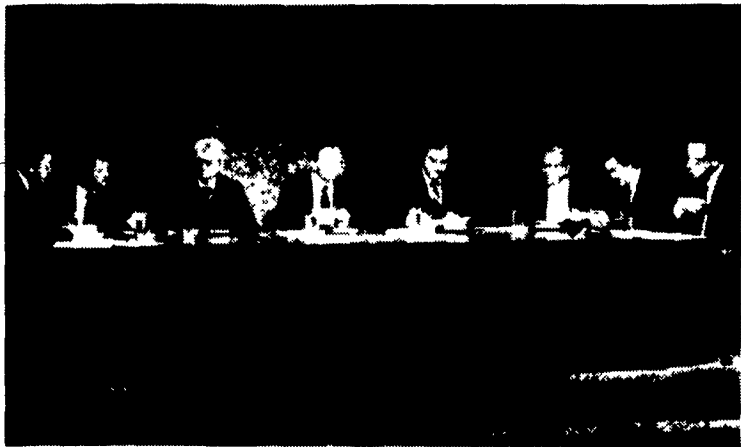


Corn growers must seek highest return

GREENSBORO, NC → If corn growers are going to survive the economic problems of the mid 1980s and beyond, they must obtain

the highest possible return on investment from their operations. Growing corn for high yields just isn't good enough anymore.



A video symposium on growing corn profitably in the 1980s was held recently in Chicago, sponsored by Ciba-Geigy. The video will be made available to growers throughout the Corn Belt. Panel participants included, from left: Orion Samuelson, moderator; Dr. Michael Owen, Department of Plant Pathology, Iowa State University; Dr. Gary Beland, entomologist, Funk Seeds International; Dr. Garren Benson, agronomist, Iowa State University; Marty Thornton, head of the farm department of the Peoples Bank, Bloomington, Ill.; Dr. Marshal McGlamery, agronomist, University of Illinois; Dr. Michael Barrett, Department of Agronomy, University of Kentucky; and Dr. Ronald Doersch, Department of Agronomy, University of Wisconsin.

That message came through loud and clear during a recent Video Symposium on Productivity in Corn, sponsored by the Ciba-Geigy Corporation. The symposium brought together university, agribusiness and financial experts from around the Corn Belt to discuss ways to manage inputs, thereby increasing profit and corn yields.

The videotaped roundtable discussion, available for corn growers, addressed fertility management, seed selection, planting dates, herbicide safety, and the correlation between good weed control and optimum yields.

Set Realistic Goals

Ron Doersch, agronomist at the University of Wisconsin, says growers must set realistic goals when planning for profitable yields. "Growers need to realize they aren't all in a yield contest. In the past growers always were shooting for that top yield. That's not necessarily a profitable yield."

Doersch added that a five to 10-year average may be a more realistic yield goal when shooting for the best economic return from a crop. "Know the level you want to shoot for and set some real goals. That's the key."

Planting Dates Crucial

Two experts from Iowa State

University, Dr. Garren Benson and Dr. Michael Owen, noted the importance of planting dates in growing corn for profit. "The size and reduction in yield varies greatly from year to year, but reduction is definitely there once you get past the 10th or 15th of May," Benson said. "After the 20th of May average yield reduction accelerates and can become quite serious."

Owen agreed, explaining that once the optimum date for corn planting has passed, "yield diminishes rather quickly." He stated that late planting, combined with poor weed control and fertility management, can have a "very adverse effect on yield." Benson added that it is more important when growers "finish planting than when they start planting."

Strip Test Reliability

The scientists also expressed concern for the reliability of strip tests in determining the effectiveness of a herbicide, fertility or hybrid. Benson said, "When you start talking yields, you either have got to have a lot of locations handled the same way or you've

got to have a lot of replication per location. When you get into the yield business, you're really into the research business and most producers are not set up to do this."

While some companies tout yield differences based on strip tests in growers' fields, Benson said beware. "In order to check yields you have to have sophisticated side-by-side comparisons. It's pretty risky otherwise."

Marty Thornton, Illinois farm manager and head of the Farm Department of the Peoples Bank of Bloomington, Ill., urges caution when companies make yield increase claims based on strip tests. "When you analyze data you have to be sure the strip tests are valid; the proper replications of the experiment have been taken, handled scientifically and analyzed carefully. When you generalize to one or two or three sites that were done without using a scientific approach, you have a real problem of misusing the data that is obtained and drawing incorrect conclusions."

(Turn to Page A24)

Lancaster Tobacco

Pennsylvania Tobacco

Intercourse, PA
Thursday, Dec. 12

Total Volume 320,000 lbs.;
Average Overall \$1.09/lb.; Top 3
Grades \$1.10-\$1.13/lb.; Out Grade
\$.40-\$1.65/lb.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

Total Volume 305,000 lbs.;
Average Overall \$1.15/lb.; Top 3
Grades \$1.17-\$1.19; Out Grade \$.35-
\$.95.

Friday, Dec. 20

Total Volume 235,000 lbs.;
Average Overall \$1.13/lb.; Top 3
Grades \$1.17-\$1.19, a few skids
\$1.50; Out Grade \$.35-\$1.10.

Monday, Dec. 30

Total Volume 146,000 lbs.;
Average Overall \$1.21/lb.; Top 3
Grades \$1.22-\$1.25/lb.; Out Grade
\$.50-\$1.22.

Looking back

(Continued from Page A1)

Meanwhile, also in Lancaster County, the state's only tobacco auction got underway, bringing better prices to growers.

PFA's marketing co-operative, PACMA, made news in 1985 by trying to form co-ops to buy the Clover Packing plant in Selinsgrove and Shamokin Packing in Shamokin. Look for more on these developments in 1986.

The state DHIA named Richard Barth its new general manager, Naomi Bupp was elected president of the Pennsylvania Farm Women's Association and Beth Heald was crowned the state's Dairy Princess.

	Hisex White	Hisex Brown
Hen Housed Production at 72 wks	273	269
Feed conversion	3.75	3.97
Egg size	25.6 oz/doz	26.4 oz/doz
Laying period depletion	0.5%	0.5%
Growing depletion	3.5%	3.0%
Final body weight	3.79 lbs	4.95 lbs

Hen Housed Production at 72 wks

Feed conversion

Egg size

Laying period depletion

Growing depletion

Final body weight

273

3.75

25.6 oz/doz

0.5%

3.5%

3.79 lbs

269

3.97

26.4 oz/doz

0.5%

3.0%

4.95 lbs



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