

State Five-Acre Corn Winner Grows Only Record Over 200 Bushels

(Continued from Page A1)

top yield nutrients have a lot to do with growing a championship crop.

"I use a special way of inserting nitrogen into the ground," said Miller. The 30 percent liquid nitrogen is placed in the ground by a process which injects it, using a tool bar with knives, between rows of corn at a depth of 8 inches. The nitrogen is inserted into the ground at the root locations, and all acres are covered with this process.

"The nitrogen is actually 'knifed' into the soil," said Miller. "Because the knives are skinny, they loosen up the ground between rows. This allows air and water to penetrate deep into the soil."

Soybean stalks left from the previous harvests are ground up and mulched into the ground. Miller said the stalks are an excellent way to ensure water retention in the soil.

Average corn yield

With this method, Miller has been able to obtain an average corn yield of about 200 bushels per acre. The seed yield estimate is 203 down to 151.

"I plant the crop early in April, about April 10 each year," he said. "A lot of farmers think that is too early, and it may be too cold yet. They wait till the last week in May or early June. But I've had good success

planting corn early. It seems the variety of corn has extra vigor and provides a good crop under cold conditions."

Miller has done well with his method of farming. Many contests he has entered have proven successful. Last week he obtained the results to the National Corn Growers Association contest, where he placed first in Pennsylvania for his non-till, non-irrigated crop. Nationwide, Miller placed ninth out of 241 entries. For the 1989 crop at the state farm show, he won the Five-Acre Corn Club contest, up against 96 other entries.

In addition, Miller won the 1987 and 1988 National Corn Growers Association Corn Yield contests. In 1988, Miller was awarded the Young Farmer Earn Corn Contest.

In 1984, Miller became a Cargill dealer. "There were no distributors or dealers of Cargill Hybrid corn in the area," he said. "They're one of the five major seed manufacturing companies."

Miller said companies such as Cargill produce all in-breds and genetic stock.

"Smaller companies purchase genetic stock that isn't owned privately from universities," he said. "Cargill produces its own stock. But no other corn variety can withstand this year's amount of rain. It really has the yield punch compared to other varieties.

Research has shown Cargill corn has the highest yield of any they have released. This year, the weather cooperated and we had the right soil conditions and fertility."

Enjoys the challenge

Miller has been farming for most of his life and enjoys the challenge. "I grew up with my father on the farm, so I've been farming all my life," he said. "I've been operating cash-rented land for 11 years."

Miller's farm covers 90 acres, owned by his father, Andrew G. Miller, who will turn 51 this year. Miller's grandfather, Andrew N. Miller, bought the land in 1929.

Miller rents land in 12 other locations, including 210 acres nearby, 200 acres in Elizabethtown, and 200 in Hershey.

Miller works with his father on a dairy business, with 80 head of Holstein.

Raised Holsteins

"We raised Holsteins ever since Grandpa purchased the farm. Dad married and moved in to take over the operation. I haven't taken over the dairy business yet.

"I like crop farming better. I work with the cows every morning and night, except in the prime of planting or harvesting. Dad runs the dairy operation and I help. I drive the tractor around a bit.

"I also do custom corn planting for far-

mers. They count on me doing it. If I have time, I'll do it for them."

The Millers also raise wheat, barley, and soybeans as cash crops. They grow alfalfa and hay for the dairy operation.

Successful farming

Miller's successful farming involves an exact combination of soil fertility and the right seed genetics. "It's a lot of both mixed together," he said. "We used a variety plow of seed. We planted four rows of different varieties of corn side by side and the best harvest we placed in the contest."

Miller lives with his wife, Tricia, and two dogs, Cody and Princess, just outside of Manheim. "The dogs are often hard to watch after," Miller said. But he enjoys the time he spends with his family, as well as the farm work.

"I enjoy farming because it's a challenge. I don't like the early hours — I prefer late hours, actually." He is awake at 6:00 a.m. for farm chores. But he is used to putting in long hours, especially in the harvest season, where rest is at a premium.

"Sometimes, if it's going to rain during harvest or planting, I'll go all night without stopping, and do 800-900 acres of custom combining for other farmers," he said. "It's what you have to do sometimes."

Computer Helps Match People With Jobs

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

CAMP HILL (Cumberland Co.) — Looking through the classifieds used to be one way to find a job. Now, with the help of a computer program, an employer looking for help or an employee looking for work can sign up with the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) Member Services Organization to find what they want.

Using a special computer database, PFA's Farm Labor Listing Service can match people with available jobs by job category.

"Certain farmers need help and people who are looking for work can use this information service," said Richard E. Denison, general manager, PFA Members' Service Corp.

A prospective employer or employee can fill out a Job Search Assistance form, available from PFA, and describe their job abilities and requirements. The PFA will then run the data through the computer and match employee needs with employer wants.

The PFA began the special service in September 1989 after requests were made by several farmers in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. An employer must be a member of PFA to use the service, but prospective employees do not have to join PFA.

Since late last year, ads have appeared in various publications listing the service.

"We've had about half a dozen responses so far," said Denison. "We'll continue to run the service for a couple of years to see how it works."

HOW TO AVOID GETTING BLACK...

