

# Soybean Depth Control, Plant Population Successful Ingredients For Winner

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Stutzman competed against 16 others in the contest. Second place went to Nelson Beam of Chester County and third went to Steven Wenger of Lebanon County.

The Washington-Duffield silt loam soil was minimum tilled (chisel plowed) before planting. Soybean planting was the first week of May using a corn planter on 30-inch rows.

The variety, an early 4 full-season soybean, works well with a 30-inch row planting. Stutzman noted that if planted early enough, 30-inch row seed placement can yield as much as narrow-row seedings, though the best yield potential will always be with narrow rows. The Stutzmans are making best use of the equipment available. Many growers who decide to plant later on, in late May or early June, use 15-inch rows or narrower to get a quicker canopy and better yields.

Stutzman used a 5-15-15 starter fertilizer at planting. No other manure was applied — and hasn't been applied since manure went on from the dairy years ago.

"We had a good plant population," he said, lowered this year to help with standability. The goal was to plant about 160,000 seeds

per acre and end up with about 150,000 plants emerging.

Going to the lower plant population from previous year may have helped standability and disease control. "If you overplant, they lodge, which causes disease problems," he said.

Stutzman used a dry inoculant at planting. And consistent depth control — planting the beans from 1-inch to no more than 1 1/4 inch deep — helped in emergence and stand uniformity. The challenge was to ensure accurate seed depth placement, considering the planting was to heavy corn residue from the rotation.

The cool weather early in the season delayed emergence — but not enough to seriously affect the stand. Stutzman paid close attention to the possible emergence of spider mites because of lower moisture during the growing season. Fortunately, the drought growers experienced in the southeastern part of the state wasn't enough to create the problem.

Stutzman cultivated between rows in the season. He said that cultivation helps not only with weed control, but to aerate the soil and help the root zone of the plants. He was the only one of the 17 contestants who cultivated.

"While I can't attribute aerating the ground to good yield, it wouldn't hurt it," Stutzman said. "It could have some benefits." Weed control also included all post-emergence applications of Pursuit/Pinnacle.

Fortunately, rains arrived just in time in mid-July to ensure good standability. The southeast part of the state dried down in August, but rain arrived to help finish the stand.

Harvest was mid- to late October. A three-acre "block" was cut out of the main field and weights were taken separately.

Stutzman enlisted the help of Mena Hautau, Berks County crops agent, in helping to measure the yields on the field.

Years ago, in the '70s, the farms owned by the Stutzmans were in dairy production. In 1980, the Stutzmans decided to switch to all cash grain and hay.

Jon attended Kutztown High School and was graduated from Lancaster Mennonite High School. He obtained a degree in agriculture from Penn State in 1989.

Stutzman is an agronomist for Brubaker Agronomic Consulting Service in Ephrata. His territory includes Berks, Lehigh, and Northampton counties, and north-



Stutzman noted that nothing special or differently was done to the ground with the yield contest winner. Normally they strive for 60 bushels per acre for an average yield. As to the award — it was simply a matter of "good weather, good timing, and being lucky," said Stutzman. The award, Stutzman believes, reflects positively on his accomplishments and his job at Brubaker's, he noted.

ern New Jersey. His wife Holly is a registered nurse at the Lutheran Home in Topton.

Many growers, who are aware of the statewide contest, often find it hard to take the time from busy schedules to sign up.

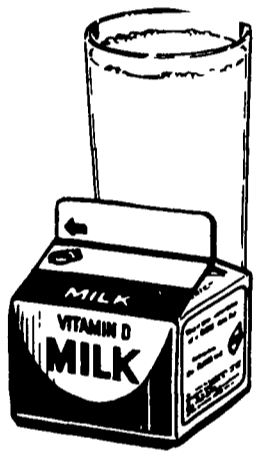
But first place proved to be an extra incentive for Stutzman. The prize? A trip for he and his wife to the Commodity Classic in February to Long Beach, Calif.

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For the winners, overall, 61 percent had current soil tests. Forty-four percent fertilized or applied manure. Tillage included 53 percent who used minimum till and 29 percent no-till. Sixty-seven

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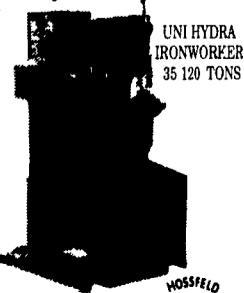
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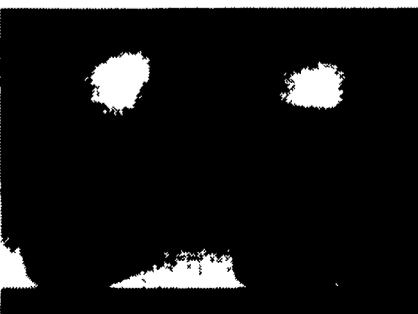
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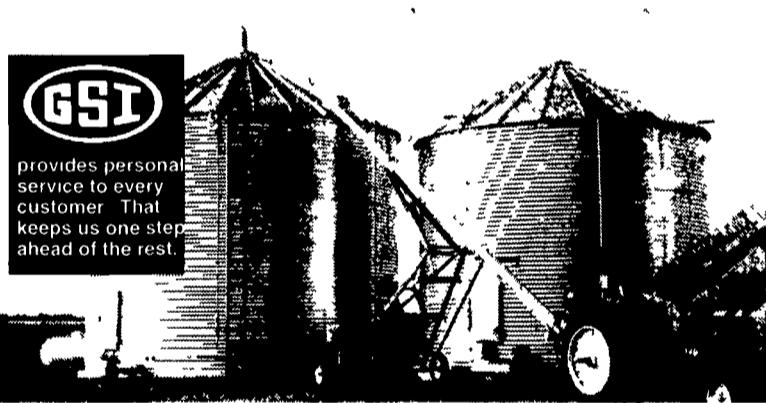
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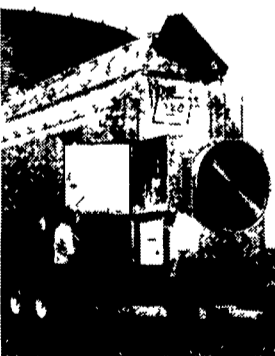


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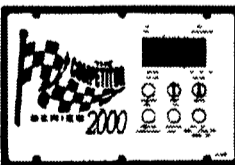
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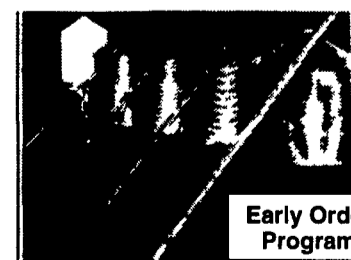
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