

## Wet Weather May Spell Disease Troubles For Wheat

WOOSTER, Ohio — Ohio's wheat is performing well despite recent rains, but saturated soils may have created favorable conditions for disease development.

Pat Lipps, an Ohio State University plant pathologist with the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, said that diseases like powdery mildew, Stagonospora leaf blotch and Fusarium head scab may become a problem if moist conditions continue.

"The wheat looks like it's in really good condition and I don't think that the recent wet weather has caused any major problems with growth and development," said Lipps, a professor with OARDC's Department of Plant Pathology. "But there are some side effects from the wet conditions that we are concerned about."

One concern is the development of head scab or Fusarium head scab, a fungal disease that can have a devastating impact on wheat production and yields if it

develops during the crop's flowering stage.

Another disease that may develop due to wet, cool conditions is Stagonospora leaf and glume blotch, a disease that can cause infections if spores are splashed onto the plant.

"Stagonospora lives on old residues on the lower leaves of plants. Because of the rain, spores could have splashed onto the upper leaves of the wheat crop and may cause leaf infections," said Lipps. "Growers should be scouting their fields right now for the development of lesions, a sign that the disease is present."

Powdery mildew is currently showing up on susceptible wheat varieties, said Lipps. "Anybody growing susceptible varieties needs to pay attention to that and apply fungicides if the upper leaves are showing disease. They should be scouting their fields at heading or before heading occurs."

## Virginia BCIA Central Bull Test Station Summary

CULPEPER, Va. — For the 45th consecutive year, bulls were developed, evaluated, and sold through the Virginia Central Bull Test Station Program operated by the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association.

In the 2002-03 test and sale year, a total of 402 bulls were tested at two test stations located in Culpeper and Wytheville. The 256 bulls which sold represented the top two-thirds of all bull tested.

This was the 45th year for the Culpeper test station, operated by Glenmary Farm, Tom and Kim Nixon owners, of Rapidan, Virginia. In the fall-born senior group at Culpeper, 105 bulls were tested and had a test ADG of 3.37 and an adjusted yearling weight of 1,116. The 87 spring-born Culpeper junior bulls recorded test performance of 3.67 ADG and 1,112 adjusted yearling weight.

The test station at Wytheville completed its 24th year, and is owned and operated by Danny Umberger. Of the 210 total bulls tested at Wytheville, 91 were fall-born senior bulls and 119 spring-born juniors. Senior bulls at Wytheville had a test ADG of 3.39 and adjusted yearling weight of 1,102, while the junior bulls posted a 3.29 ADG and 1,156 adjusted yearling weight.

Across the two stations and four test groups ranging in length from 112 to 133 days, the 402 total bulls averaged 3.42 ADG and 1,124 adjusted yearling weight. These 402 bulls included 331 Angus, 42 Simmental, 17 Charolais, and 12 Gelbvieh.

In the three sales conducted, the 256 bulls grossed \$397,975 to average \$1,555. The 62 Culpeper Senior bulls averaged \$1,734, 53 Culpeper Junior bulls \$1,517, and 141 Wytheville Senior and Junior bulls \$1,490.

Across all three sales, 210 Angus averaged \$1,573, 27 Simmental averaged \$1,490, 11 Charolais averaged \$1,668, and 8 Gelbvieh averaged \$1,631.

Average total test and sale costs for bulls sold during the 2002-03 season was \$665, for an average return of \$890 to the consignor per bull sold.

The \$1,555 average sale price per bull for 2002-03 across all tests and sales compares to averages of \$1,723 in 2001-01, \$1,931 in 2000-01, \$1,530 in 1999-2000, and \$1,697 in 1998-99 for the Virginia BCIA test station bull sales.

Annual fluctuations in bull prices are the result of several factors. Analysis of BCIA bull test station data reveals a very strong association between feeder calf prices and bull sale prices

## Farmers Coping With Late May Corn Crops

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Although Pennsylvania farmers got a good start on corn planting this spring (more than 40 percent complete by mid-May), recent rainy weather likely will cause planting to fall behind average, says a corn management specialist in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Gregory Roth, associate professor of agronomy, advises farmers not to panic, but to follow a few simple tips in approaching later plantings this year.

"Yield losses are not that great due to later planting," Roth says. "In fact, sometimes when planting has been completed quickly in recent years, we've had low yields, so farmers should wait until soil conditions are right."

Weather patterns should grow more summer-like as the jet stream begins its retreat during the next few weeks.

"The state climatologist is predicting chilly conditions for the second half of May, followed by a significant warming trend and ending with another cool spell. Rainfall will taper off in the coming week, with a period of showers expected May 21 and 22, more projected for May 26 and 27 and again at the very end of the month."

Rainfall should be above normal in most places, and it's better to wait for things to dry out. We always regret planting in a wet seedbed."

When soils finally dry out after wet-weather planting, Roth says, furrow sidewall compaction can hamper corn growth. So farmers shouldn't panic and begin planting in inappropriate conditions.

Other tips for dealing with the wet weather include:

- Don't delay planting due to tillage or spreading fertilizer.

Consider no-till planting and sidedressing of fertilizer.

- Don't be concerned about switching to shorter-season hybrids, at least until the last week of May — unless you had selected some very full-season hybrids for your area.

- Consider using Bt hybrids. Recent research has shown corn planted later in May often encounters more second-generation corn borer damage and has a more consistent yield response to Bt than earlier planted corn.

- Reconsider the use of starter fertilizer on later planted corn. Starter benefits are generally small on many manured soils and they decline as planting is delayed.

- Plant the seed 1.5 to 2 inches deep. Shallow corn planting is more risky later in the season when conditions in the seed zone can quickly change to hot, dry and cloddy.

## 2003 Virginia-North Carolina Wool Pool

CANAL WINCHESTER, Ohio — The Virginia-North Carolina Wool Pool will be marketing wool to Mid-States Wool Growers Cooperative Association based in Canal Winchester, Ohio.

Each pool will sell wool on either a cash or grade and yield basis.

Producers are encouraged to package, handle and store their wool in an appropriate manner in order to maximize the value of their wool clip. Wool should be packaged by type/grade (ewe vs. lamb wool, long staple vs. short

wools, fine vs. medium wools) in plastic bags, and be clean, dry, and have foreign material (straw, mud, manure) removed prior to packaging.

Following is a list of local pool delivery dates, and locations where wool will be picked up by Mid-States:

June 17-Augusta Co., Va.  
June 18-Orange, Va.  
June 19-Farmville, Va.  
June 24-Wytheville, Va.  
June 25-Christiansburg, Va.  
June 26-Clarke Co., Va.  
July 1-Highland Co., Va.  
July 10-Lebanon, Va.

July 17-Tazewell, Va.  
July 22-Williamston, N.C.  
July 23-Sparta, N.C.  
July 24-Asheville, N.C.  
July 25-Albemarle, N.C.

To confirm the above dates, and for more information regarding specific times and locations, contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension Office.

## Va. Ram Lamb Performance Test Begins

STEELES TAVERN, Va. — A total of 73 rams from 16 Virginia consignors were delivered April 29 to the Virginia Sheep Evaluation Station located at the Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center near Steeles Tavern. Breeds of rams consigned include: 49 Suffolk, 14 Dorset (both fall and winter-born), 7 Hampshire, and 3 Dorper.

After a two-week adjustment period, performance will be measured over a 63-day gain test. At the completion of the test, rams will be evaluated for reproductive and structural soundness.

The top 60 eligible rams will sell at the station on Saturday, August 23. Complete performance information will be available on all rams, including ultrasonic estimates of carcass merit. For information please contact Scott Greiner, phone (540) 231-9159.

across years. From 1998 to 2001, feeder calf prices rose steadily as did prices paid for bulls. Since 2001, bull sale prices have declined as have feeder calf prices. These trends are consistent across all tests and sales for the past 10 years. While bull sale prices have fluctuated in recent years, average test and sale costs have remained relatively constant.

The average total test and sale cost of \$665 for 2002-03 compares favorably to average total costs of \$659 in 2001-01, \$710 in 2000-01, \$645 in 1999-2000, and \$626 in 1998-99. Therefore, net returns to consignors per bull sold have primarily been a function of differences in sale price and not test costs across years.

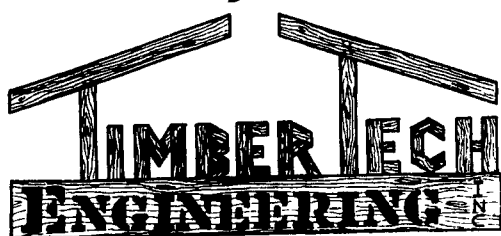
Average net return per bull sold over the last five years have been \$890 in 2002-03, \$1,064 in 2001-01, \$1,221 in 2000-01, \$885

in 1999-2000, and \$1,071 in 1998-99.

A total of 90 breeders participated in the Central Bull Test Station program last year. There were 75 Virginia breeders, and a total of 15 from the surrounding states of Tennessee (7), West Virginia (3), North Carolina (2), Maryland (2), and Kentucky (1). Several breeders participated in more than one test and sale. Of the 256 bulls sold, 226 were purchased by Virginia buyers and 30 (11.9 percent) sold out of state.

All bulls tested and sold were consigned by breeders who are members of the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association. For information concerning the Central Bull Test Station program for 2003-04 contact the Virginia BCIA office at (540) 231-9163 or visit <http://bcia.apsc.vt.edu>.

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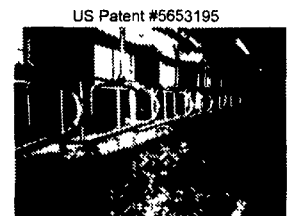
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