

Checking the Back Forty



Kevin H. Ganoe
Regional Field Crop Specialist
 Central New York Dairy & Field Crops Team
 Cornell Cooperative Extension of
 Chenango, Herkimer, Otsego,
 and Schoharie Counties
 5657 State Route 5, Herkimer, NY 13350
 Phone: 315-866-7920 Cell: 315-219-7786
 FAX: 315-866-0870
 khg2@cornell.edu

Weekly Growing Degree Days and Rainfall thru August 28, 2011

Station	Temperature (°F)				Growing Degree Days (GDD) (Base 50°F)					Precipitation (Inches since 4/1/2011)			
	High	Low	Avg	Departure from normal	Week of August 22-28	Since May 8	Departure from normal	Since May 22	Departure from normal	Week	Departure from normal	Season	Departure from normal
Cobleskill	80	52	67	2	118	1874	305	1781	292	3.28	2.45	26.6	8.87
Morrisville	81	47	67	4	119	1868	370	1760	339	1.48	0.64	21.6	4.03
Norwich	83	48	66	2	115	1894	325	1767	280	2.14	1.34	27.5	9.87
Oneonta	80	46	66	3	111	1879	426	1767	386	2.79	1.95	29.3	10.03

*From the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service New York Field Office and the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets
 Weekly accumulations are through 7:00 AM Sunday Morning*

We are tracking Growing Degree Days (GDD) during the season using 50°F as a base temperature. There will be two dates of reference for these GDDs, May 8 and May 23, 2011. Rainfall accumulation will be from April 1 on.

It is clear from the above rainfall data that the accumulations for last week ended at 7am on Sunday morning as that total doesn't reflect totals by the end of the day. I will have a separate email on dealing with flood and storm damaged crops.

The GDD info suggests that you should be checking corn planted the week of May 8 for silage harvest especially if it is an early hybrid and it has had some drought stress. This fits what I am seeing in the field. I can not emphasize enough that this is not a general call to start corn silage harvest but I have a concern that we have continued to accumulate GDDs and that if you are not checking fields the early planted corn may get too dry too quick. So I am suggesting you need to start checking those early planted fields now.

So we need between 1950 to 2100 GDDs to get to silage harvest depending on corn hybrid maturity and as of this week the early planted corn that is an early maturing hybrid should reach that 1950 GDD mark. It has been a difficult summer due to the weather but heat wise not sure we could have asked for more to catch up from the spring.

Fall Alfalfa Harvest

This is a question I get every year and to me the answer is pretty straight forward. If it is September and you need feed to get through the winter you take the forage off and if you don't you leave it. There is no question in my mind that if you leave alfalfa after September 1 alfalfa stands stay longer and are more weed free than if you remove the growth. Are you better off taking the growth after a frost, maybe, but I still see an alfalfa field without cover as a liability. If you don't need it let it be.

Tipped or leaning corn due to Hurricane Irene

Considerable corn in the area has become tipped or is leaning after the wind and soaking rains of Hurricane Irene. A few areas in fields are flat to the ground but in most instances plants are reasonably still up right. I see the most root lodging in over populated areas in headlands or point rows or where corn looks like it was stressed for other reasons. But certainly non-stressed corn that was tall and green went down also.

If plants have really tipped to the point of being horizontal and there is root injury I think we might expect those plants to have some early senescence. But over all you might expect these tipped plants to actually be delayed in maturity as they are on top of one another and their ability to receive light and photosynthesize will be reduced. I don't see any immediate concern over yield reductions other than the difficulty, and acknowledging that will be a big one, of harvesting.

Ear and stalk rots may be more of a problem in these fields and leaf diseases may also be more prevalent as the season progresses.



References:

Wind Damage Management in Corn
<http://cornandsoybeans.psu.edu/winddamagemanagement.cfm>

Leaning Corn and Suffering Soybeans
<http://bulletin.ipm.illinois.edu/pastpest/articles/200318d.html>