

Checking the Back Forty



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Weekly Growing Degree Days and Rainfall thru June 26, 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 June 13- June 19	Since May 8	Departure from normal	Since May 22	Departure from normal	Week	Departure from normal	Season	Departure from normal
Cobleskill	83	46	65	0	108	635	144	542	131	1.97	0.99	13.60	3.02
Morrisville	84	48	67	4	121	610	148	502	117	2.44	1.50	15.29	4.94
Norwich	83	46	67	3	121	678	190	551	145	3.19	2.26	19.05	8.35
Oneonta	83	46	67	3	118	662	214	550	174	2.56	1.58	18.50	7.07

*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*

I will be keeping track of 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.

The good and bad news. Good news is that we continue to be about 7-10 days a head of normal for GDD which is good if you got corn in later as we have continued to have the heat to move it along. The bad news is that planted that late it will still be a struggle to get it to mature.

At V6, 6 leaf collars showing, the growing point of corn is now above the soil surface. Corn at this stage is rapidly accumulating dry matter and also rapidly using nutrients which is why now is the time to get corn sidedressed with nitrogen. It can actually get a little difficult to correctly stage corn at this point because the two lowest leaves are starting to drop off. Now is also when you may see corn plants with tillers or “suckers” that have initiated below the soil surface. Although thought to take away from yield, typically these tillers neither help or hurt yield and their presence may actually indicate plant populations are on the low side. Earliest planted corn is V9 –V10 and leaves will be appearing every 2-3 days.

References

Tillers or “Suckers” in Corn: Good or Bad?

R.L. (Bob) Nielsen, Agronomy Department, Purdue Univ., West Lafayette, IN
<http://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/corn/news/articles.03/Tillers-0623.pdf>

How a Corn Plant Develops, Special Report No. 48, Iowa State University, 1998

Continued.....

Besides birds there are black cutworms...

As I suggested last week birds are damaging to shallow planted fields but cutworms have also been out and about this spring. In some instances it is hard to tell because the birds and the cutworms both clipped the top of the plant off and you may see green growth coming from the plant that is left. A couple of differences to tell them apart. The bird damage usually leaves a depression where the plant is/was because the bird worked the plant to get the seed. You may also find plants missing totally missing or plants hanging on to the soil by the radical. You won't find depressions with cutworms and you will find a plant and see there. The plant that is left may be everything from what was the growing point down to the roots but it will be there. The top of the plant with cutworms may remain if the plants were larger when feeding occurred but then what you see is a wilted plant with a hole eaten into the side of the plant below ground. Although getting late now to find them the black-grey larvae during the day can be found in the soil near the base of the plant.

Cutworms are probably one of the more frustrating field crop insects to deal with. It is hard to know exactly when they might strike. They moths move in from the south and lay eggs in the spring. Corn fields that are later planted, after sods, weedy from grasses and in low wet areas all tend to be more prone to cutworm problems. Seed applied insecticides and traited corn do not offer sufficient control to heavy infestations of these insects. The only way to know you have these insects is to be in the field when the corn is in that 1-2 leaf stage. Treatment is suggested when 5 percent of plants have been cut and the larvae are less than .5 inches long.

References:

2011 Cornell Guide for Integrated Field Crop Management
<http://ipmguidelines.org/Fieldcrops/content/CH03/default-6.asp>

Pest and Crop, Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, June 3, 2011 - Issue 9
Cutworms Chewing Through Technology – (Christian Krupke and John Obermeyer)
<http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/pestcrop/2011/issue9/index.html>

Potato Leafhoppers are also about

Potato Leafhoppers (PLH) are certainly in the area but how much problem they will be to any one farm may depend on several things. PLH came into the area on the fronts that brought us the rain we received toward the end of May or early June. They typically look for the youngest newest growth to stay in and one place you may want to check are any new alfalfa seedings you managed to get in this spring. That is where I found them this week and not only saw adults but also nymphs or young leafhoppers. Both adults and nymphs cause damage but nymphs don't fly so they get taken up at harvest, except for new seedings. Young alfalfa plants actually maintain enough leaf area that the nymphs have some place to remain and do so. So I would encourage that PLH have had time to build numbers on new seedings and should be checked.

Given how variable harvest has been there is a good chance we may see PLH chased from alfalfa field to alfalfa field as everyone is harvesting fields at different times during the growing season. Reminder once you start seeing the yellow/purple V back up the leaf it is too late to control. Harvest is usually the best control unless crop is too short then use labeled insecticides

Reference: <http://ipmguidelines.org/Fieldcrops/content/CH04/default-10.asp>

Buckwheat as a midseason crop

There is certainly interest in what can be planted as a midseason crop and one answer is buckwheat. I realize that buckwheat will not meet the forage or grain needs other crops do but if you have a few acres that you are not sure what to do with I contacted The Birkett Mills in Penn Yan, NY and they are still contracting for this year: The suggest you start with their website:

www.thebirkettmills.com

315-536-3311

Apologies if there are other mills willing to contract as I am not aware of them and will equally pass their info along if someone has it. The Birkett Mills have a grower contract letter at their website that spells out the details.

There is the online Buckwheat Production Guide for the Northeast written by Thomas Björkman at the Cornell University Geneva Experiment Station.

<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/bjorkman/lab/buck/guide/main.php>

For more information of growing buckwheat there are two shorter Cornell publications written by Thomas Björkman that may help with management practices:

Fact Sheet 50 Buckwheat Production: Planting

<http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/publications/factsheets/factsheet50.pdf>

Fact Sheet 51 Buckwheat Production: Harvesting

<http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/publications/factsheets/factsheet51.pdf>

I don't offer buckwheat as a crop that will drastically change this poor growing season for you but if you have some acres you don't want sitting there idle it may offer an alternative.