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# AgLink

Your source for agricultural and rural topics affecting community banks in Minnesota

## Harvest Season Ready to Begin

Above-normal temperatures during the second half of the growing season in most of Minnesota have allowed this year's corn and soybean crops to reach (or be close to) maturity.

Most of the early-planted corn hybrids have now reached physiological maturity, while some corn may need a bit more time to reach the desired moisture level for harvest. Most soybeans are now turning color and dropping leaves, with full-scale soybean harvest ready to begin in many areas.

A total of 3.22 inches of precipitation has been recorded for the current month (as of September 15), at the University of Minnesota's Southern Research and Outreach Center (SROC) in Waseca. The normal rainfall for the entire month of September in Waseca is 3.67 inches. The SROC in Waseca received 11.7 inches of rainfall in August, which was the second-wettest August in history, and was just shy of the record monthly rainfall level in 1924. The wet August followed the second-wettest July in history for Waseca, with 8.93 inches of rainfall recorded. This brought the two-month total precipitation level for July and August to 20.63 inches in Waseca, which exceeded the previous two-month precipitation record by over 3 inches, which was set in 1979.

One concern with this year's harvest in many portions of southern Minnesota and northern Iowa is the very wet field conditions that exist across the region. Heavy rains in many areas during the week of September 12-16, have resulted in standing water and/or saturated soils in many locations. Rainfall amounts varied from slightly over one inch to over four inches across south-central and southwest Minnesota during the week. If we continue to see rainfall, the wet field conditions could become a concern for timely and efficient harvest.

Stalk quality and strength could become another major concern with the 2016 corn crop in many areas, given the saturated soil conditions that exist in many areas. Such conditions can also be very favorable for the development of root rot and stalk-rot diseases in corn, which could result in more lodging, as well as increased harvest losses. The very warm, late growing season, and rapid maturity process for corn, is also likely to lead to the weakening of stalks in some corn hybrids

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across the region. Corn with deteriorating stalk quality could be very susceptible to wind damage later this Fall. Growers in affected areas are encouraged to scout their fields for potential stalk quality issues, and adjust their 2016 corn harvest schedule accordingly.

Crop development in many areas of the state is much more advanced this year, compared to a normal year, due to the above normal, growing-degree units (GDUs) that have been accumulated since May 1. As of September 15, a total of 2,601 GDUs had been accumulated during the 2016 growing season at the SROC in Waseca. That level is more than 10 percent above normal for that date. The 2016 mid-September GDU accumulation is about 130 GDUs higher than the long-term average in Waseca for September 30.

Corn is considered to have reached physiological maturity once it's in the "black layer" stage. Some of the earlier-planted corn in southern Minnesota had already reached this level by September 15 and most corn that was planted on a timely basis should reach the "black layer" stage by the end of September.

Once corn matures, it is usually at about 30-32 percent kernel moisture. It then begins to dry down naturally in the field. Some earlier-planted, shorter-season hybrids of corn were reported at a moisture content of 23-26 percent in mid-September. However, most corn is still at 25-30 percent moisture or higher. Ideally, corn needs to be dried down to about 15-16 percent moisture for safe storage in grain bins until next Spring or Summer.

If stalk strength is solid and corn is standing strong, most producers will want to allow for more natural drying in the field, in order to save on drying costs. However, if stalk breakage is occurring, farm operators will likely want to harvest corn that has reached maturity, once field conditions are fit.

For more information, contact Kent Thiesse, Farm Management Analyst and Vice President, MinnStar Bank, Lake Crystal at: 507-381-7960 or [kent.thiesse@minnstarbank.com](mailto:kent.thiesse@minnstarbank.com).

## Ag Network Launching

The inaugural meeting of ICBM's Ag Network is set for October 19, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the ICBM office in Bloomington.

The new Network will provide a forum for ag lenders to learn from guest presenters, tackle challenging industry issues, and share best practices.



The group is open to all ICBM bank members. There is no charge to attend and lunch will be provided.

Interested in participating? Contact Doug Krukowski at

