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Strong Storms Damage Crops and Force Replant Decisions

Following the heavy rains and severe storms in many areas of the Upper Midwest from June 8-17, some farm operators are now facing difficult decisions with regard to replanting crops.

Many locations in Minnesota, Wisconsin, northern Iowa, and the eastern Dakotas recently received several inches of rainfall, which led to standing water and some drown-out damage in numerous fields. In addition, there were numerous reports of hail damage.

Most producers are unlikely to replant corn this late in the season, except for livestock producers, who can utilize the corn as silage. Based on research, corn planted in southern Minnesota during mid-June has less than 50 percent of the expected yield potential, compared to corn planted in late April to early May. Corn planted later in June has even less yield potential. Soybean yield potential is also reduced with planting after June 1, but not as severely as corn.

Early varieties of soybeans that are planted in mid-June in southern Minnesota have a realistic yield expectation of 30-40 bushels per acre, compared to normal yields of 50 bushels per acre or higher. By late June or early July, soybean yield expectations drop to 20-30 bushels per acre. The yield potential of late-planted soybeans is highly variable, and is very dependent on favorable weather conditions in August and early September, as well as having a later-than-normal, first-frost date. In some years, such as in 2016, the later-planted soybeans yielded 40-50 bushels per acre, due to a long, warm growing season with adequate soil moisture. However, this is not a normal occurrence. It is best to consult with an agronomist or seed representative before finalizing crop-replant decisions.

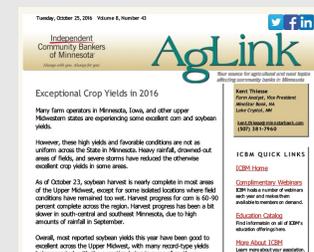
University research indicates that corn stands can be reduced up to 50 percent with only a 20 percent reduction in yield potential, provided that the stand reductions are fairly uniform. Similarly, soybean stands can be reduced by up to one-third, with only a 10 percent or less loss of yield potential. It should be noted that there is a lot of variation in these results in actual field conditions, due to gaps between plants in the row and the health of the remaining

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plants in the field.

Another factor affecting replant decisions is Federal Crop Insurance policies, which allow producers some compensation for replanting, following crop losses from heavy rains, hail, or other natural causes. To qualify for replant compensation, farmers must have a loss area of at least 20 acres, or 20 percent of the total acres in an insured farm unit, whichever is less. The crop insurance replant provision can only be exercised once on the same crop acres. Some farm operators may have already used the replant option following poor emergence in May, and thus could not use the replant provision again in June, following the excessive rainfall and hail damage.

A majority of farmers in the Upper Midwest insure their corn and soybeans with a crop insurance policy utilizing enterprise units, which group all acres of a given crop in a county together for calculating potential crop loss and insurance-indemnity payments. By comparison, a crop insurance policy with optional units insures crops down to individual sections within a township. The reason most farmers choose enterprise units is to get higher insurance coverage levels at a lower premium cost. However, many times producers fare much better with optional units, when dealing with localized crop losses from hail or drown-out damage.

Crop producers in the Upper Midwest who are facing either prevented-planting or crop-replant situations should contact their crop insurance agent for more details on the prevented-planting and replant options with various crop insurance policies. The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) has some very good crop insurance information and fact sheets available on the agency's [website](#).

The University of Minnesota Extension Service also has some good information available on hail and flooding damage to crops on its [website](#).

Even though parts of the Upper Midwest have been dealing with severe storms and excessive rainfall, which has caused some crop damage, most areas have benefitted from the warmer temperatures and rainfall in the first half of June, which have provided very favorable growing conditions. According to data from the Minnesota State Climatology Office, the statewide average temperature in Minnesota for the first half of June was approximately 69 degrees, which was the third-warmest temperature on record for that period, trailing only 1933 and 1988.

As of mid-June, the crop condition for a large majority (75 percent) of the corn and soybean crops in Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska was rated good-to-excellent.

Overall growing conditions in Illinois, Indiana, and other eastern Corn Belt states has been far less favorable, and only 50-60 percent of corn and soybean crops is rated good-to-excellent in most areas. Large areas of North and South Dakota have been dealing with

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moderate drought conditions during the first half of June, which have significantly reduced overall crop ratings. As of June 12, on a nationwide basis, 67 percent of the U.S. corn crop and 66 percent of the soybean crop was rated in good-to-excellent condition, which compares to 75 percent for corn and 74 percent for soybeans in mid-June of last year.

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.

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