

Corn And Soybean Variety Plots Yield Valuable Results

Issue: Corn and soybeans account for 70,000 acres in Warrick County, IN and an additional 500,000 acres in nearby counties. Farmers are always concerned about which varieties to select in order to maximize yields and income. Composition analysis are important in documenting the value of various components of the crop. Variety plots help producers as one source of information in deciding which varieties to compare and/or use on an individual farm.

What We've Done: For over 30 years the County Agricultural Extension Educator, along with other area Extension Educators, specialists, local farmers and seed dealers plan, plant, observe and harvest replicated variety plots. In 2000 the plot consisted of 71 yellow corn and 25 white corn varieties replicated 4 times and 80 soybean varieties replicated 3 times.

At harvest time, a Plot Breakfast is held to present the results of the corn yields and to look at a standing corn and soybean plots as well as to conduct timely educational presentations to help producers keep current on issues and concerns with harvest, handling, storage and marketing of the grain.

Since 1996, samples of corn and soybean varieties have also been analyzed for grain composition in order to build data for farmers to more effectively select varieties for specific uses and markets. Corn and soybeans plots have been evaluated for insects and diseases as well as observed for standing ability of the plants.

Impact: A survey of farmers indicate that they have been able to earn as much as \$40 per acre more due to the marketing information presented. Over 200 people attend a Plot Breakfast annually to hear timely agronomic information, grain harvest, drying and handling recommendations and the Ag Marketing Outlook.

Attendees have the opportunity to evaluate potential hybrid selections by observing the standing replications with the published yield data. The plot trial demonstrated over 60 bu/ac difference in corn yield and over 25 bu/ac difference in soybean yields. This is \$125 per acre difference in potential return to the producer. White corn data is of particular interest to several producers in southwestern Indiana because of the premium price that it often brings due to its use in the food industry. Over 1,000 copies of the plot results are distributed to the farmers and seed dealers. Due to the uniformity of plots and the replicated procedure, this plot is considered one of the most reliable sources of data. These plots are not the only criteria that farmers use to select hybrids, but is used as a major input into their variety selections.

Grain composition analysis for all corn and soybean varieties is also available and is used by farmers and grain merchants to sell specific varieties for an additional 20 to 30 cents per bushel. There is only a few plots that provides composition analysis data.

Contact: Gary A. Michel, Extension Educator - AgNR
Warrick County Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
Telephone: (812) 897-6101 Fax: (812) 897-6102
E-mail: gary.michel@ces.purdue.edu