



Field Notes for The Week Of

4-3-2023

March Wraps up Windy and April Starts off Wet!

The month of March is officially in the books, and I feel like I just finished running a marathon! Even though it seemed to fly by at a rapid pace, the month of March was quite the windy one. Wreaking havoc on trees, house roofs, and barns, the scares of March dot the Adams County landscape. With the month of March finally behind us, it is time to officially begin April and pray Mother Nature does not play any April fool's joke on us! The extended forecast is predicting a warm but unfortunately wet April with active storms for the Midwest and Great Lakes region. No matter what I truly look forward to April as the landscape comes to life. Pastures are growing, trees are budding, and baby livestock is (hopefully) jumping and playing. Easter Sunday falls on April 9th this year and there is a small chance of rain in the evening hours, I am keeping my fingers crossed that the rain does not fall. Rain on Easter is like a two-edged sword, I grew up hearing the old saying rain on Easter means seven more Sundays of rain and if it fails to rain on Easter the hay crop will be poor. Either way, the weather is going to be a challenge. That and taxes are a guarantee! This past week did have some open windows of opportunity to accomplish some fieldwork. I talked to a few producers who managed to get some fertilizer spread, tillage accomplished, and some new hay seedings in the ground. I had a few discussions on when the best time to fertilize winter wheat.

Currently, the winter wheat is well ahead of its growing schedule depending on when it was planted. But for the most part, much of the wheat that I have looked at is in the green-up phase and tillering or beginning to tiller. Research has shown that the critical stage of growth for nitrogen uptake for wheat is the Feeks growth stage 6 and in normal seasons this would be late April or early May. Considering the season is almost a month ahead most of the wheat in Southern Ohio has met growth stage 6 or very soon will. The next big question is how much Nitrogen should be applied. There are two ways to go about nitrogen rate calculations, one is estimating a realistic yield goal. Take the last 3 years of historical wheat yields on your given farm or field and take the average, next take that average, multiply it by 1.33, and then subtract the result by 13. Example = $N \text{ Rate} = (1.33 \times \text{Yield potential}) - 13$. So, let us say that your average yield is 75 bushels per acre = $1.33 \times 75 = 99.75 - 13 = 86.75$ lbs of total N. 87lbs of total N would equate to 189lb of urea (46-0-0) per acre. Some best practices that can be done to prevent nitrogen loss can be, waiting for the proper growth stage of the wheat, avoiding applications before large rain events of 1 inch or more within 24 hours of application, using nitrogen urease inhibitors or ESN-coated urea, lastly splitting the application into smaller amounts.

