

# Weekly Article

5-9-2022

## Check Under the Hood Before Heading to the Field

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. May started off on a soggy note, but warmth and dry conditions looks to be a trend for the second full week of May. Planting progress across the county has been slow to start with much of the field still idle and weeds growing higher each day. A few producers were able to get some planting done but emergence has been very slow due to the wet cool soil conditions. Adams County is not alone, much of the state and even the country is facing planting delays due to the challenging weather conditions. According to the USDA planting progress report, the week ending May 2<sup>nd</sup> only showed 3 percent of Ohio's corn crop was planted and 2% of the soybean crop was planted and 0% emerged. Corn Planting progress for the United State stands at 14% which is behind the 5-year average of 33% and Soybeans Stand at 8% planted also well below the 5-year average of 13%.

The wet condition might have farmers standing still for a little while, but it sure hasn't slowed down mother nature, especially the birds! This past week I received a call from a local producer explaining how he is battling the birds building nest in the engine compartment of his tractors, as he explained the birds can build a complete nest in a very short period. In the past, he has had a fire due to the nest causing costly repairs and downtime. I can speak for myself and most all farmers, birds seem to have grown in population over the year creating quite the mess and fire hazard when they decide to make a home under your tractor hood! Here is some facts and consideration for protecting not only your machinery this spring but your own health as well.

1. Learn your Bird Species- There are multiple species of birds that like to make their nest in barns, sheds, and other small and tight areas. The most common that we see around the barnyard include Barn Swallow, Starlings, tree swallow, house martin's, house sparrows, kestrels, and even barn owls. The Ohio Division of Natural Resources is a good source to contact to help ID different bird species.
2. Learn the birds' habits- Certain bird species prefer different environments. Food sources, living quarters, water sources, human activities, and lighting can all play key role in which a bird chooses to make a nest.
3. Disturbance is important- Using deterrents such as predator decoys such as other birds of prey or even decoy snakes have seen success. Raising the tractor hood up while not using it can also be a good way to prevent nesting.

4. Stay Diligent- Make sure to always check the tractor if you know you have had a bird nesting problem in the past. Materials that birds build their nest out of can be very combustible when in contact with heat from the tractor engine. Allocating some time for checking can save 1000's in damage and even injury or loss of life.
5. Nesting season can last a long time- Most bird nesting period can range from March through the end of June. So, stay aware even in early summer for late nesters.

Some other details to go over

- Commodity Loan and LDP's for feed grains and other grain crops sign up deadline is May 31, 2022 call the FSA office to get signed up at (937) 544-2033 option 2.
- May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands signup deadline. This program allows producers to keep their land in agriculture production by keeping the land in permanent grass cover, actively graze, produce hay. In turn the program provides an annual rental payment to landowners.
- Crop planting certification with USDA FSA – July 15<sup>th</sup>.