

Weekly Article

6-13-2022

Options for Prevent Plant Acres

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. When you thought this spring couldn't get much more challenging, if sky high fertilizer prices, machinery, and parts unavailability, and \$6.00/gallon diesel fuel does get one hot under the collar, 6 inches of rain in a matter of a week will. Many crop fields still lay bare waiting for some type of crop to be planted, some fields are still under water! This past week was a slow but stressful week for Adams County producers as they watch the days go by and time running short on planting their cash crops. At the same time many corn and soybean fields desperately need weed control applications to take place and corn is starving for nitrogen and root death is taking place due to high moisture. The grain crops are not the only things suffering though, the hay crops continue to mature, and quality is degrading rapidly, livestock are constantly being irritated by flies and other biting insects. Some drier weather would do a lot of things some good, but the faucet doesn't shut off completely!

Crop insurance coverage dates for corn has past and soybean dates are knocking on the door, many producers might opt to not plant some acres and go through the preventative planting acres program. This is a helpful option that helps producers financially if crops just can be planted due to weather extremes, even though many times payments are not nearly as lucrative as having a well yielding crop to harvest in the fall. There are some issues that might arise in preventative plant acres though, idle fields will usually grow something and that something is most likely not beneficial. Noxious weeds such as Johnson grass, Canada thistle, mares tail and many more can grow healthy and strong without any competition, just as the old country song goes, "the weed get high where the corn doesn't grow." Today I wanted to discuss options and considerations if you do choose to prevent plant your remaining crop acres this season.

- **Prevent weed seed bank deposits-** As producers we want to make deposits in our savings account not the soil weed seed bank. Many weed seeds can remain viable for many years in the soil. Johnsongrass for example can remain viable for up to 50 years in the soil. Applying herbicide, mowing, or tillage practices should be used to keep weeds from going to seed and even taking a hike over to the neighbor's property.

- Idle fields can hurt next year's yields- there is a phenomenon call fallow field syndrome. Fallow field syndrome occurs when mycorrhizal fungi populations are reduced due to the lack of growing roots in the soil. This can hinder crop yields, especially corn the following season due to that lack of uptake in zinc and phosphorus.
- **Utilize cover crops-** If you have never tried cover crops, this is your perfect opportunity. Cover crop oats, radishes. Vetch and many more are great options for summer cover crops. If you are a livestock producer, taking advantage of summer annual forages such as sorghum Sudan cross, Sudan, teff grass, and pearl millets can be great ways to provide feed and or sell to other producers for feed. Cover crop also help protect the soil from erosion and surface compaction caused by heavy rains.
- **Consider a new rotation-** If you have fields that are 1 crop every 5 year candidates, it might be time to rotate away from grain crops. Conservation reserve programs (old set aside program) can be a good way to put at risk or poor producing field into a cover and get paid for it! Talk to your local USDA FSA office about sign up periods and qualification criteria.
- **Get the odd jobs done-** In a corn and soybean rotation, the window of opportunity to get odd but critical jobs accomplished done is tight. Drainage improvement, erosion control structures, and lime applications can be done when no crops is present and hopefully soil conditions are better suited.

Some other details to go over.

- June 23rd Native Warm Season grazing workshop 5:30 p.m. -8:00 p.m. Located at Green Acres farm 7547 J Bolender Road. Felicity, Ohio 45120. This is a FREE event. Email Chad Bitler to register at cbitler@green-acres.org
- Crop planting certification with USDA FSA – July 15th.
- Adams county Fair – July 11th – 16th make plans to attend and support the future leaders of our county and country.
- Ohio State Fair- July 27, 2022 – August 7th
- Southwest Corn Growers- Agronomy field Day will be held August 16th, 2022. Contact Ken Ford with ANR Educator for Fayette County OSU Extension for more details. Phone- 740-335-1150 or email ford.70@osu.edu