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Corn Seedling Damage from Ammonia

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Abstract
There have been several reports of corn seedlings being damaged from ammonia, even fall applied anhydrous ammonia. Ammonia injury has been noted in past springs and more frequently occurs with shallow placed ammonia, ammonia applied near the time of planting, urea placed near the seed, and with dry soil conditions.

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Corn Seedling Damage from Ammonia

By John Sawyer, Department of Agronomy

There have been several reports of corn seedlings being damaged from ammonia, even fall applied anhydrous ammonia. Ammonia injury has been noted in past springs and more frequently occurs with shallow placed ammonia, ammonia applied near the time of planting, urea placed near the seed, and with dry soil conditions.

In some cases the plant is killed, and in other cases the early root and plant growth can be impacted slightly or severely. Damage, potential re-growth, and season-long plant development rate can be aggravated by other stresses. For more information and pictures of this type of damage, please read a more in-depth article on the topic, Corn Seedling Injury from Ammonia.
Two examples of corn seedling damage from ammonia.

John Sawyer is professor with research and extension responsibilities in soil fertility and nutrient management.