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Flooded Corn and Saturated Soils

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Flooded Corn and Saturated Soils

Abstract

The storms last Sunday, May 25, and again on the May 29 and 30 have unloaded extraordinary amounts of rain in many parts of Iowa. Soils in the majority of the state are likely saturated. Low lying areas of fields whether they are tiled or not, are covered with ponds and areas along streams and rivers are flooded. It is not an attractive sight for producers!

Keywords

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Flooded Corn and Saturated Soils

ICM News

May 30, 2008

By Roger Elmore and Lori Abendroth, Department of Agronomy

The storms last Sunday, May 25, and again on the May 29 and 30 have unloaded extraordinary amounts of rain in many parts of Iowa. Soils in the majority of the state are likely saturated. Low lying areas of fields whether they are tilled or not, are covered with ponds and areas along streams and rivers are flooded. It is not an attractive sight for producers!



Ponding in a field with two-leaf corn seedlings. Story County, Iowa, May 30, 2008.

Many wonder how long corn seedlings survive trapped in standing water. Corn that is just germinating can perhaps withstand four days of saturated and/or flooded soils. Seedlings with less than six leaves, can withstand four days under water if air temperatures are less than the high 70's. If air temperatures are greater than that, seedlings may only survive for one day. Corn has fewer than six leaves at this time throughout Iowa. We have [more information on this matter](#) elsewhere on our site.

As fields drain and soils dry, many producers will need to assess their options for replanting. Feasible replant dates are closing fast. If a producer could replant in the next few days, corn may have perhaps 90 percent yield potential. In 10 days or so yield potential will be around 70 percent or less. Currently the best information we have on replanting is at found in ISU Extension publication, *Corn Planting Guide* (PM 1885).

Consider carefully your options with poor corn stands. If a replant corn is chosen, planting shorter-season, adapted hybrids is now in order.

See more photos are in our [image gallery](#) and check out our corn production pages for more information.

Roger Elmore is professor of agronomy with research and extension responsibilities in corn production. Lori Abendroth is an agronomy specialist with research and extension responsibilities in corn production.

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