

Excerpt from a web site and e-newsletter article

In Pursuit of the Perfect Ear

All producers dream of walking into their fields to find stalk after stalk ripe with 16-row, 40-plus kernel-per-row ears. Of course, the high yields this kind of ear will result in are gratifying, but perhaps more so is the knowledge that all the time spent planning, analyzing, gambling, and dealing with the unexpected has paid off. Each field is full of "the perfect ear."

Now, if producers could only follow the same step-by-step process next year and be assured of the same results!

But the business is agriculture and the rule is variability. The fact is that much of what determines yield is out of producers' control. Producers can, however, be aware of the many factors that determine yield, and work to utilize best practices on those factors that can be controlled.

Yield is a function of kernel number and kernel weight. While hybrid plays a critical role in determining the number ears per plant, the health of those plants can be affected long before the seeds are put into the ground.

In the Fall

In reduced tillage and [continuous corn](#) situations, fall is the time to begin thinking about residue management. Proper management will result in an improved seedbed, stronger plants, and higher yields. Set your combine head to leave stalks of a manageable height and consider a fall nitrogen application to break down tough hybrid residue.

"With the Yetter 3-coulter system we were able to plant into soybean stubble and corn residue without any broadcast tillage of the soil. The corn planted into bean residue was some of the more even stands that I have ever experienced, and even the corn-on-corn was able to recover from our early wet and cold conditions faster than other corn-on-corn in our area."

**Mike Homandberg,
Minnesota**

Emergence

There is not a stage of the spring planting season that is not important for plant development; however, four are more critical than others in connection with determining yield. (Dr. Kurt Thelen, Crop & Soil Sciences, Michigan State University)

The first critical stage of plant development is emergence. Corn does not compensate well for poor stands, so establishing one that is uniform is key. Today's hybrids handle stress associated with high plant populations well, and it is wise to adjust your plant population upward until you reach the optimum level.

The [right planter adjustments](#) and attachments contribute significantly to uniform emergence and stands. Use coulters designed to handle your soil conditions for

"Growing the perfect ear of corn is no easy task. We need to align the best cultural practices with the correct hybrid for the field and hope the weather cooperates with our decisions. Moving to continuous corn adds new risks that potentially dictate a different hybrid selection. The great news is that new technologies, genetics, and information available help us reduce stresses in all situations and reach for the perfect ear."

*Doug Clouser, Beck's
Hybrids Product Placement
Specialist*

optimum results. Using coulters increases the capacity of the soil to hold moisture and aids germination for uniform emergence. Yetter Manufacturing offers a complete line of coulters attachments to meet all your planting needs.