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Have You Heard?

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ON-FARM RESEARCH UPDATE

The Nebraska Extension On-Farm Research Network is a statewide, on-farm research program that addresses critical farmer production, profitability and natural resources questions. Growers take an active role in the on-farm research project with local Extension involvement. Nebraska commodity organizations are active with this program as partners.

Growers gather at regional meetings each winter as an opportunity to hear results from each other. The key is using field length replicated treatment comparisons that were completed in growers' fields, using their own equipment. Also, with yield monitor technology, reference strips can be strategically placed and data can be parsed from the computer card to get replicated results.

Research projects this year that were discussed included: cover crops, variable rate seeding, planting populations, multi-hybrid planting, starter fertilizer, fungicide applications, alternate crop rotations, multi-hybrid planting uses, seed treatments, and sidedress nitrogen management technologies including drone and sensor based management and variable-rate nitrogen management.

Laura Thompson leads this program for Nebraska Extension who spoke at the Wilber Crop Clinic on February 16th. It would be good to grow this network in Southeast Nebraska on our soil types. Rodney Wiese, Wilber, allowed Extension Educator Gary Lesoing and I to conduct on-farm research on a field last year where a cereal rye cover crop had been fall seeded and grazed in January through the first part of April. When the cattle were moved down the road to the next field, the cover crop field had a knife application with 155 pounds of UAN fertilizer. When the cereal rye grew taller, I noticed a fertilizer response in the cereal rye over top the knife marks before corn was planted and it made me wonder if this would hurt subsequent corn yield. Gary and I set up replicated small plots with no additional nitrogen, 50 pounds and 100 pounds of additional nitrogen of urea broadcasted on May 24. The result was there was no statistical difference in yield respectively at 190, 194 and 198 bushels per acre. The plots were located on a high yielding portion of the field. We plan on continuing this study this year.

Another on-farm research plot was with Greg Peters, DeWitt. He compared irrigated soybeans with commence seed treatment with no commence treatment in replicated field length plots. The commence plots averaged 69.5 bushels per acre and no commence treatment was 68.4 bushels per acre and no statistical difference. Even if it was a difference, it didn't pay in this trial in 2017 on his farm.

Learn more about UNL on-farm research at: <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/on-farm-research> There is a data base to search past results. Soon the 2017 will be added to the website.

If you have an idea or something you would like to study on your farm whether it is fertilizer change, crop protection product, a biological product, cover crops or any idea that could impact yield and profitability, let me know and I can get protocols for you for 2018. It would be great to grow this network in our area of the state.

Do you have a specific research topic in mind for 2018 you wish to research? We can design a protocol customized to your farming operation. You may contact me at 402-821-2151 or rpryor1@unl.edu or Laura Thompson at laura.thompson@unl.edu or 402-624-8033.