

Vegetable Production and the New Farm Bill

R. Precheur. A summarization of a position statement by Red Gold, Inc. and a Midwest vegetable grower

History

The 1996 Freedom to Farm Act established "base" acres for farmers growing several types of crops. Among these, was the establishment of corn as a contracted crop with an established acreage base for each farm determined by the historic plantings of 1991 to 1995. The remainder of the acreage was eligible to be planted into any crop the farmer desired. An unnoticed insert into that bill at the time however restricted any grower from planting fruit and vegetables (hereafter called FAV's) on any contracted acreage. In certain Midwest states, the established bases allowed growers enough flexibility to plant processing tomatoes and other FAV's during the decade of the 90's. If a growers' FAV's exceeded the open acreage on their farm, penalties were established that were very severe.

An effort supported the reduction or elimination of these penalties in the 2002 Farm Bill, but unfortunately this language was not included as a part of the new law.

Issue Today

The new Farm Bill retained all the old language concerning the restriction of FAV's on contracted ground, but with one major addition. In an attempt to further increase support of major commodities, soybeans were added as a new contracted crop with base acres to be established from planting histories. In most cases, Midwestern farms would practically qualify to have 100% of their cropland as contracted acres in the new law. Unfortunately, FAV's may not be planted on program contracted acres.

Many processing vegetable companies are dependent and committed to diversification and farms growing FAV's. In the case of processing tomatoes, this new Farm Bill effectively eliminates the expansion in production of our current tomato growers, the ability to bring new growers into a profitable and important enterprise, and to replace the acreage ready to be passed on by long time growers who are ready to retire from an intensive but rewarding career. The bill contains a provision to allow FAV planting by growers with an established FAV base.

Excerpts from a letter by an IN grower sent to a IN Senator

The new farm bill is now very seriously threatening us. In fact several of us may be forced to quit growing processing tomatoes and cabbage for the fresh/processed markets, and quit growing other vegetable and specialty crops. The problem is that under the old farm bill we could find enough acres to plant vegetable and specialty crops without planting on base acres. This new bill now has a soybean base so essentially every available acre will be in a corn, soybean, or wheat base and thus prohibits planting fruit, vegetable, and specialty crops.

Every acre having a base is great if you have a grain/livestock farm; it's disastrous if you do any specialty crop farming. Most vegetable and specialty crops require a four-year crop rotation, which means that it takes 400 acres for every 100 acres in vegetable crops. This means that every farm would have to be exempted from the farm program in order to rotate your vegetable crops correctly. The new farm bill complicates it even more by making it a permanent exemption rather than a yearly one and making the base acres only the land owner's decision.

For example, our family farms 2400 acres, 200 of which we own. What landlord is going to be willing to permanently exempt acres from the farm program if it could potentially reduce their land value by \$850 an acre if they'd choose to sell? What landlord will agree to permanently exempt acres if it removes the competition for higher cash rent values of up to \$50/acre or more? How will we ever be able to cash rent additional acres for vegetable and specialty crops as any new land acquired will most likely have a full acreage base?

The farm bill as it now stands will give incentive to grain crop only; fruit and vegetable growers will decline and their economic impact on the state will be lost. For some of us, it may be necessary to exit agriculture.

For additional information

Ohio vegetable and fruit growers can contact their respective societies, (OVPGA and OFGS).

Presidedress Soil Nitrate Test (PSNT) for Sweet Corn by Bob Precheur

With all the rain in many parts of the state, this may be the year for you to try the PSNT test. This soil test provides information about the nitrogen supplying capacity of the soil and used to predict sidedress soil nitrogen needs. It can help determine how much more nitrogen may be needed. It's very useful where organic amendments (eg. manure) have been added to the soil or vegetable crops are planted in rotation with legumes.

During the first 30 days after emergence, a sweet corn plant uses only 10 percent of it's total nitrogen requirement. Applying nitrogen just prior to the time of high crop demand (at sidedress) dramatically increases nitrogen efficiency. If sweet corn follows a clover crop, alfalfa or manure application, a PSNT test can show up to 100 lbs of nitrogen available. In a year with leaching rains, it can show nitrogen needs.

1. Take the test about 10-14 days before a sidedress application.
2. Will not work with fields where nitrogen has been broadcast or plowed down.
3. Samples should reflect no more than 20 acres. (15-20 cores per sample)
4. Sample soil to a depth of 12 inches.
5. Spread out and air dry samples as quickly as possible (can use a fan).
6. Do not send wet samples.

PSNT samples can be sent to MI, PA and NJ. Buy soil test kits before the season. Cost is about \$7.00. Add \$1.00 for a faxing fee of the report. Results are faxed within 48 hours after arrival at the lab.

Ask for the PSNT test kit at the following labs:
Agricultural Analytical Services Lab
The Penn State Univ.
University Park, PA 16802-1100
814-863-0841
fax: 814-863-4540
[http:// www.agronomy.psu.edu/AASL/aasl.htm](http://www.agronomy.psu.edu/AASL/aasl.htm)
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Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1325
Phone (517) 355-0211
e-mail: dahl@msu.edu
Rutgers Soil Testing Laboratory
P.O. Box 902
Milltown, NJ 08850
Telephone: 732/932-9295

Crop Reports

By Brad Bergefurd, and Thom Harker

SOUTHWEST (From May 9, 2002)

Thursday , Friday , Saturday and Sunday growers were able to get back into the fields. Activities included working ground, direct seeding cucumbers, summer squash ,sweet corn, green beans and transplanting tomatoes, melons and cabbage. Spraying of herbicides was also being done. Recovering of plastic mulch blown and washed up by recent weather was also being reapplied and re covered. Harvest of radishes, spring onions, lettuce and some plasticulture strawberries has begun.

Monday (May 6) field work continued with Thunder storms reentering the area Monday around noon. From 11 am Monday (5/6) till 11 am Wednesday (5/8), 48 hours, areas received 4.5 inches +/- of rainfall. High winds, tornadoes (touch down in Wilmington), hail and heavy downpours have caused extensive erosion damage to newly planted vegetable fields. Tomatoes that are about 18 inches tall have experienced wind blown damage and stems have been twisted from the high winds. Growers have been busy trenching fields of standing water.

Sweet corn seeded 3 weeks ago has very spotty emergence with much black cutworm damage. Most all plastic has been removed from early planted plastic sweet corn, which is now about 1 +/- foot tall. Cucumbers planted 3 weeks ago are experiencing slug damage and damping off problems. Some fields have been re "spot" seeded

The Threat of Lightening

R. Precheur

There are many safety issues growers need to be concerned about on the farm and one that might be overlooked is the danger from lightening. Did you know that Ohio ranks fifth in the nation in the number of deaths and injuries caused by lightening. In the period from 1959 to 1999, there have been 130 deaths and 497 injuries attributed to lightening. These figures are only slightly behind fourth place NY, which has 131 deaths and 513 injuries for the same period. The top three states are FL, TX and NC. These figures represent the whole population and not just the farming community but since growers spend a large portion of their time outdoors, they need to be cautious in bad weather. Act quickly when there is threatening weather and do not delay getting to safety.

The 7 Day Outlook*
By Robert Precheur

More Rain, Cold and Possible Frost

Another large rain storm will move into OH late Thursday and continue into Saturday. Field work planned for this week should be completed by Thursday. Over the next 5-7 days, temperatures will average 10-15 degrees below normal. The potential for frost will exist from Sunday night to Monday morning in low lying areas. Another large cold air mass will direct cold air into the northeast during this period. Watch for dew points at or below 32 degrees as this will indicate the potential for frost. Use the surface analysis charts provided in the "weather links" section of the VegNet website. The dew point is the number in the lower left corner around the station marker (circle with a small line coming out indicating the wind direction). The number in the upper left is the temperature

AKRON-CANTON

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|
TEMP
MIN/MAX | 48 58| 40 51| 35 53| 37 55| 38 57| 40 63|
WIND | 9 11| 9 11| 7 10| 6 9| 6 8| 5 8|
PREC.
PROB. 24 | 84 | 55 | 35 | 40 | 36 | 36 |

CLEVELAND

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|
TEMP
MIN/MAX | 48 57| 39 51| 35 52| 39 56| 40 58| 41 63|
WIND | 8 10| 10 10| 6 8| 5 9| 6 8| 4 8|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 84 | 53 | 36 | 40 | 35 | 36 |

COLUMBUS

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|

TEMP

MIN/MAX | 50 61| 41 50| 34 57| 38 57| 40 60| 43 66|

WIND | 6 8| 8 8| 5 7| 4 7| 4 6| 3 5|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 83 | 49 | 30 | 34 | 34 | 35 |

CINCINNATI

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|

TEMP

MIN/MAX | 52 58| 42 53| 36 59| 41 64| 44 67| 47 70|

WIND | 9 12| 10 9| 6 8| 6 8| 5 8| 5 8|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 85 | 38 | 24 | 29 | 32 | 34 |

DAYTON

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|

TEMP

MIN/MAX | 50 58| 41 51| 36 56| 39 56| 43 61| 44 65|

WIND | 8 10| 7 10| 6 8| 5 8| 5 7| 4 7|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 84 | 42 | 28 | 32 | 32 | 34 |

TOLEDO

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|

TEMP

MIN/MAX | 47 59| 37 51| 34 57| 37 57| 39 61| 41 65|

WIND | 10 13| 12 12| 6 10| 5 10| 5 8| 4 8|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 81 | 46 | 34 | 36 | 34 | 35 |

YOUNGSTOWN

DAY DATE | FRI 17| SAT 18| SUN 19| MON 20| TUE 21| WED 22|

TEMP

MIN/MAX | 48 60| 39 51| 32 51| 35 58| 36 57| 37 64|

WIND | 7 10| 8 10| 6 9| 5 8| 5 7| 5 7|

PREC.

PROB. 24 | 84 | 57 | 36 | 42 | 36 | 36 |

* LEGEND:

TEMP MIN/MAX - forecasted minimum and maximum temperature for time periods midnight to noon and noon to midnight.

WIND - MEAN WIND SPEED (KTS) FOR TIME PERIODS midnight to noon and noon to midnight.

PREC. PROB. 24 - probability of precipitation for the 24 hour period.

What's New At The VegNet Web Site

Slide Presentations

Pepper Variety Slides 2001 | HTML Slide Show

Pumpkin Variety Slides 2001 | HTML Slide Show

Go to the VegNet homepage.

VegNet Vegetable Schools

A series of slide presentations are now available in order to update you on the latest pumpkin and sweet corn research. We begin with 6 pumpkin topics in Pumpkins 101 and have 10 slide presentations available in Sweet Corn 101. In sweet corn. Powerpoint presentations and html online slide shows are available now. Go to the VegNet homepage.

Pumpkins 101

The use of trap crops and Admire for cucumber beetle control and New varieties for 2001. In coming weeks, we will have presentations on cover crops for disease control and pumpkin fungicide use. Check back often.

Perimeter Trap Cropping. Online html slide show | Perimeter Trap Cropping. PPT, 7 Mbytes

See also the Research Results section on the home page for text version of the report.

Pumpkin Variety Slides 2001 | HTML Slide Show

Sweet Corn 101

Presently only Powerpoint presentations available. Coming Soon: Online HTML slide shows. Check back often Nine topics including:

Aspects of Variety Selection based on Disease Control [ppt 40 KB]

Internet Link To "Reactions of Sweet Corn Hybrids to Prevalent Diseases" Dr. Jerald Pataky www.sweetcorn.uiuc.edu

Producing Early Sweet Corn [ppt 3.5 Mbytes]

Managing Weeds in Sweet Corn [ppt, 9 Mbytes]

Sweet Corn Heribicies & Variety Sensitivity. [ppt 2Mbytes]

Sweet Corn Development and Critical Periods for Irrigation Management [ppt 1.6 Mbytes]

Flea Beetle Management in Sweet Corn [ppt 510 KB]

How To Keep Worms Out of Sweet Corn Ears [ppt 8.3 Mbytes]

Role of Bt Transgenic Hybrids in Sweet Corn Pest Management. [ppt 21.2 Mbytes]

Bt Sweet Corn Efficacy in OH, 1999-2000 [ppt, 208 KB]

Online Edition of the 2001 Ohio Vegetable Production Guide - Now Available

Sweet Corn Disease Resistance Ratings

The following are summarized lists of Dr. Pataky's work at the Univ. of IL on disease reactions of sweet corn. In these summaries, all experimental and processing varieties have been removed and only named varieties which were rated for common rust or MDM are included. The first list are those named varieties rated for common rust. The second list are only those named varieties rated for Maize Dwarf Mosaic virus (MDM). For a complete report, E-mail: Bob Precheur:

precheur.1@osu.edu

Common Rust of Sweet Corn

MDM of Sweet Corn

Do You Know Us?

Find out what we've been up to. The OSU Vegetable Team Report is available in PDF file format for downloading from the VegNet homepage.

Sources of Pheromone Traps Used in Vegetable Pest Management.

Do you need to find traps, lures or suppliers, click on the Vegetable IPM button on the left side of the homepage, then click on the 'Sources' document in the Vegetable IPM section.

IR-4 News

Also in the Vegetable IPM section, you can link to the IR-4 website. Read the results of the 2000 food use workshop, monthly and quarterly newsletters. Find out the latest on pesticide registrations for minor crops. Learn about biopesticides plus much more. Click on the Vegetable IPM button on the VegNet homepage and then click on the IR4 link in the Vegetable IPM section.

[Return to Vegetable Crops Homepage | Ohio State University Extension](#)

We appreciate very much the financial support for this series of vegetable reports which we have received from the board of growers responsible for the Ohio Vegetable and Small Fruit research and Development Program. This is an example of use of Funds from the "Assessment Program".

Where trade names are used, no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Ohio State University Extension is implied. Although every attempt is made to produce information that is complete, timely and accurate, the pesticide user bears the responsibility of consulting the pesticide label and adhering to those directions.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Keith L. Smith, Director, Ohio State University Extension.

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