

National Corn Growers Award Top Entries

During its recent corn yield contest, the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) sorted and placed a record number of entries - doubling it in some circumstances - that surpassed national average corn yields despite crippling, persistent drought. Kansas growers did well among national competition, posting several impressive yields on the state level

The National Corn Yield Contest, in its 48th year, is NCGA's most popular member program. With 8.262 contest entries, 2012 surpassed all other years of the competition and awarded 18 winners in six production categories with verified yields averaging more than 316.3222 bushels per acre. This was compared to the projected national average of 122.3 bushels per acre last year. All four of Kansas first place state winners had a combined average yield of 279.6 bushels per acre. At more than 317 bushels per acre, Vern Nightengale, Ingalls, had the top yield in the state competing in the irrigated division.

Brandon Hunnicutt, chair of NCGA's Grower Services Action Team, said many members join NCGA to participate in the National Corn Yield Contest. The event tests their skills as a farmer, he said.

"While they join to gain entry, their view of the organization and corresponding level of participation, evolves," Hunnicutt, a Giltner, Neb., grower, said. "Once a contest participant looks at our activities and achievements on behalf of all American growers, they see the value in a grassroots approach that unites the voices of corn farmers across the country to affect change. Reluctant joiners turn into vital members, spokespeople for their industry and active advocates of NCGA membership."

Kansas producer Corey Franken, Troy, ranked first in the state non-irrigated contest with Pioneer P1522HR and a yield of 248.8564 bushels. Second place from Kansas was Hugh Kinsey, Troy, with Pioneer P1395AM1 and a yield of 237.3857 bushels. Legacy Farms, Chanute, ranked third in Kansas using DEKALB DKC64-69 and a yield of 230.7770 bushels.

Kansas Winners in the no-till/strip-till non-irrigated contest were Idol Brothers, Hiawatha, with Pioneer 33K44 and a yield of 236.7992 bushels. Jeff Koelzer, Onaga, placed second with DEKALB DKC62-09 and a yield of 232.0627. Third place was Henry Farms, Inc., Robinson, with a Pioneer P1498HR and 225.4997 bushels.

The irrigated contest state winner was Vern Nightengale, Ingalls, using Pioneer P1625HR, which yielded 317.4786 bushels. Mike Timmons of Fredonia used Pioneer P1522HR to earn second place with a yield of 273.0338 bushels per acre. And third place was Loren Lucas, Johnson, with Pioneer P1625HR and a final yield of 272.2748 bushels.

The no-till/strip-till irrigated contest winner Josh Koehn, Montezuma, with Pioneer 33D53AM-R and a yield of 306.6088 bushels per acre. Second place was Fred Goossen, Montezuma, with Pioneer P1625HR and a yield of 305.8135 bushels. Grant Webber, Sublette, tied for third with Pioneer 33D47 and 297.3083 bushels.

Vern Nightengale, who previously won the irrigated division, also turned in the top yield in the

no-till/strip-till division planting Pioneer P1625HR with a yield of 315.2220. According to contest rules, only one award can be given per membership. Josh Koehn, who won this division had another entry with Pioneer P1625HR and a yield of 299.7838.

National and state contest winners will be honored at the 2013 Commodity Classic in Kissimmee, Fla., in publications such as the NCYC Corn Yield Guide and many receive awards from participating sponsoring seed, chemical and crop protection companies.