

Kansas Corn Growers Have Weather to Blame

Spring rain and some snow have delayed corn planting in Kansas, a bittersweet problem to have, said Kansas Corn Commission Chair Mike Brzon. He said farmers need good soil moisture and also warm soil temperatures to get their crop off to a good start.

"The soil needs the moisture but that and the cold weather is pushing our planting progress back on the calendar," Brzon said. "But forecasts show improving conditions for planting and we can plant a lot of corn in a short time."

As of Monday, April 22, five-percent of the state's corn crop has been planted. Due to the moisture on Monday evening and Tuesday across much of the state, this figure holds until growers can get back in the fields. The five-year average for this week regarding Kansas corn planting is 20-percent and last year at this time, the state's corn growers were ahead with 30-percent planted.

Last year's corn planting in Kansas, however, was extremely early. In 2012, 75-percent of the Kansas corn crop was in the ground by the first week of May. The five year average for the first of May for Kansas corn planting is around 50%.

In 2008, wet weather slowed corn planting in Kansas. Kansas farmers planted 45-percent of the corn crop, nearly 2 million acres, in the second and third weeks of May.

This week, temperatures are expected to remain below normal for two-thirds of the country, making soil preparations a slow grind. Still, Kansas farmers remain optimistic they can go full-force with planting soon.

"Believe me we are all ready to get into the fields," Brzon said. "Given the chance, growers will take all the moisture we can get. It's a priority. But we're looking forward to warmer weather that will allow us to get our corn planted and off to a good start."

A cool, wet spring has delayed planting across much of the country, according to recent reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is not cause for alarm but rather a delay as farmers seek to plant near-record acreage this spring.

Despite these delays, a U.S. Department of Agriculture report on the usual corn planting and harvesting dates across the United States issued in 2012 shows that most areas have not yet reached or are just now entering the period in which the most planting activity occurs.