



Crop Condition

- Depleted sugars in the stalk and collapsed cells contribute to early death and poor standability.
- Collapsed ear shanks may cause dropped ears.
- Stalk rot and ear rot pathogens can invade and grow rapidly if moisture returns.
- Insect infestation in field or storage may increase infection by stalk or ear rots and affect ability to harvest or store the crop.



Harvest in a Timely Manner

- Stressed crops may deteriorate rapidly due to standability or grain quality issues.
 - If wet conditions develop, crop condition will worsen even more quickly.
- Assess crop condition early and prioritize field harvest order accordingly.
- Drydown will be rapid. Moistures below 15% represent loss of saleable product.

Use Care When Setting Combine

- Adjust speed to keep the machine full and adjust gathering chains accordingly.
- Small, rubbery cobs will be difficult to thresh. Adjust concave, cylinder, fan speed and stripper plate settings accordingly, beginning with manufacturer's suggested settings.
- Decrease the concave clearance first, then adjust cylinder speed, beginning lower than normal.
- Adjust sieves to retain a smaller grain size.
- Reduce the air carefully to remove lightweight materials but not the grain.
- Check frequently for changes in the crop or equipment that require re-adjustment.



Handle Grain Carefully

- Stress cracks / broken kernels harbor high levels of fungi and easily develop storage diseases.
- Use a rotary screen, perforated auger housing or other screen to remove fines and broken kernels before storage.
- After filling, extract and redistribute grain from the bin center cone to remove the accumulated fines that restrict air flow.
- Monitor grain temperature and moisture regularly to detect "hot spots" of moisture or fungal activity early.
- Follow other recommended practices for long term storage (see [Maintaining Corn Grain Quality Through Harvest and Drying](#) at pioneer.com).



Grain Sale and Delivery

- Find market outlets early.
- Ability to take drought-stressed grain with inherent quality problems may be a factor for some buyers.
 - Limits for broken or moldy kernels and test weight will differ, depending on export or domestic destinations.
 - This will affect the ability to purchase or mix grain in some channels.
- Test grain samples and determine suitability for different buyers including local livestock or ethanol production as appropriate.



Reassess Tillage and Fertility Practices

- Overall stover levels will be lower, reducing the amount of tillage needed to manage it.
 - Less tillage will save fuel and time while increasing erosion control.
- Lower fungal disease incidence in dry weather means lower inoculum levels on exposed residue for next year.
- Low grain yields mean reduced need for nutrient replacement; consider three-year replacement cycle rather than two-year.
- If harvest removed silage or stover, increased removal of P and K is likely.
- Dry summer soils will reduce nitrogen loss by leaching or denitrification. Consider testing for nitrogen before application if the field is going to corn next year.

Assess Crop Rotations

- Consider possible residual nitrogen as a factor if going back to corn.
- Future weed seed supply in the soil will be ample where herbicides had difficulty controlling stressed weeds in dry soils.
- Herbicides fail to break down in dry soils, which could affect following crops.
 - Depends on chemical used and method and timing of application
 - Some crops and varieties/hybrids are more sensitive to specific chemistries
 - Ask for and adhere to the manufacturer's recommendations for following crops when there are risks of crop response
- Drought was widespread but conditions varied and different regions will have different problems, many of which may not be known until next spring.

Extreme Widespread Drought Occurs Infrequently

- Be cautious before making drastic changes in management based on one year's experience.
- Use hybrids that have proven successful over a period of years.
- Significant reductions in planting rates could limit yield potential in a more normal year.
- No year is average. Flooding is just as likely as a drought next year.



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