Hardin County Extension News Release
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Corn Planting Progressing Well

*Hardin County* – Spring planting season started in earnest this past week in Hardin County. Farmers were in the fields doing tillage work, spreading fertilizer and manure, spraying for weeds and termination of cover crops, as well as planting corn. Warm dry temperatures aided in this progress, with the exception of some fields that were not quite fit to begin field work.

According to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Great Lakes Region, there were 4.5 days suitable for fieldwork in Ohio during the week ending May 3rd. Late week warm temperatures and receding soil moisture surpluses yielded the largest planting opportunities of the season. Fertilizer application and manure application occurred last week in preparation for planting where soil temperatures were still a little too cool. The ideal weather also favored planting of specialty crops. Apples and peaches are in bloom as well.

Crop progress for the week ending May 3rd put Ohio at 15% of corn planted, compared to just 2% the week before. The same time this past year, only 8% of corn was planted in Ohio. Over the past 5 years, the average corn planted in Ohio by this time has been 30%. Local conditions in Hardin County have seen a higher percentage of corn planted in the past week.

Although corn is being put in the ground, emergence is still at 0% statewide as of May 3rd. This is typical for this time of year, with the 5 year average only showing 6% emergence in Ohio by this date. Soil conditions need to have adequate moisture and at least 50 degrees temperature at the planting depth for corn to sprout and emerge. 76% of Ohio topsoils were reported with adequate moisture, with 22% at surplus moisture conditions, and only 2% short.
There has been between 0.27-0.59 inches of rain reported by CoCoRaHS rainfall reporters in the county for the current week which has slowed down some progress in the field. The optimum time for planting corn in northern Ohio is April 15 through May 10, so current progress would indicate that much of the corn planted in the county will be in the ground by this window providing the weather continues to cooperate.

Farmers are recommended to avoid switching hybrid maturities unless planting is delayed to late May. If planting is possible before May 20-25, plant full season hybrids first to allow them to exploit the growing season more fully. Research in Ohio and other Corn Belt states generally indicates that earlier maturity hybrids lose less yield potential with late plantings than the later maturing, full season hybrids.

Although the penalty for late planting is important, care should be taken to avoid tillage and planting operations when soil is wet. Yields may be reduced somewhat this year due to delayed planting, but effects of soil compaction can reduce yield for several years to come.

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