



**HAMILTON
AGRONOMY**

One of the most important things
we help grow is trust.

Words to grow by...

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Asgrow/DeKalb Hybrids Stand Up to Season's Tests

Hamilton Agronomy is offering a rock-solid set of hybrids and varieties for the 2011 growing season, with products available from Asgrow/DeKalb and Croplan Genetics. Asgrow/DeKalb hybrids have shown good strength despite growing conditions that tested stalks, reports Hamilton Agronomist Jeff Vander Werff. "The Asgrow/DeKalb hybrids are standing well, with less lodging and better harvestability compared to some other brands." He explained, "In some other hybrids, the season's plentiful rains and good growing conditions actually caused some hybrids to experience a condition where the plant began to cannibalize the stalk. We've been very pleased at how the Asgrow/DeKalb and Croplan hybrids have performed." For more updates on Fall 2010 hybrid and variety performance, and to discuss Asgrow/DeKalb and Croplan genetics for 2011, contact your Hamilton Agronomist.

Weigh Basics Before Locking in Hybrid Orders

With each growing season, the financial argument for early corn seed orders seems to grow. Enticements range from volume pricing to early purchase incentives. But before locking in a hybrid, return to a few basics to test your selection. A sound order should consider several factors, including multi-location and, if possible, multi-year yield averages, as well as traits specifically needed on your farm.



Hamilton Agronomists are ready to help you make these decisions. It's critical to consult comparative yield data, while also checking grain moisture and standability stats. Check multiple resources, including independent strip trials, as well as replicated trials, from seed companies, universities and independent research entities. Begin reviewing hybrids from trials nearest you, comparing those with similar maturities.

Desirable hybrids will exhibit consistent performance, across different locations with differing soils and environmental conditions, and consistently strong yields. Also consider insect resistance, disease resistance, and grain quality (test weight and susceptibility to breakage). Remember that transgenic traits protect yield, as opposed to generating yield.

Seed-Count Pricing Trend Continues in Soybeans

An historic shift in soybean seed pricing continues, with companies continuing to move from bag prices to seed-count pricing. Syngenta Seeds, Inc., is among the latest to join the trend. The company last month announced its 2011 NK brand soybean line-up would be sold in "EZ-Count" units of 140,000 seeds.

In the past, seed pricing and cost-per-acre projections have been complicated, as growing and storage conditions lead to variable seed size and weight from year-to-year. While seed bags traditionally have weighed 60 pounds, seed variations could lead to bag counts ranging from 132,000 up to 180,000.

Syngenta reps say the pricing system "eliminates concern over seed size and weight variation and allows growers to select varieties based on agronomic characteristics that are best for their farm, rather than the size of the seed."

Hamilton Feed Mills Certified as Safe Food/Safe Feed

If you market grain to Hamilton Farm Bureau, it may become an input in feeds now certified by the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA). The organization recently announced that both Hamilton Feed Mills meet AFIA criteria "demonstrating and ensuring continuous improvements in delivering safe, wholesome livestock feed..." The mills are among just five in Michigan to receive the certification. Hamilton Farm Bureau Chief Operating Officer Wade Blowers commended Mill Managers Gary Brinks and Bob Nienhuis for the achievement. Blowers said he hopes the certifications support feed customer promotions, noting, "Consumers are increasingly interested in learning about their food and being assured that it is safe."



Hamilton Agronomy Offers CFA Crop Input Loan Program

Cooperative Finance Association, Inc. (CFA) crop input loans are available through Hamilton Farm Bureau for 2011. Enroll by March 15, 2011 for competitive interest rates as low as 0 %, and payment deferred up to March 15, 2012. See this newsletter's insert for more information.

Get Jump on Weeds

An early harvest in west and northwestern Michigan means more acres are available for wheat, or where wheat doesn't grow, for weeds to take root. If you battled weeds during 2010, consider a fall burn-down herbicide application, suggests Hamilton Agronomist Pat Lusk. "Glyphosate is very economical, and BASF and Valent also have fall herbicides that look really strong out there to go after some tough-to-control annual weeds," Lusk said.



Advance Soil Fertility; Schedule Grid Sampling Now!

This season's early harvest creates one especially good opportunity - that of catching up your farm's fertility. Because of tough weather conditions in recent spring and fall seasons, many area growers lacked time to address soil fertility needs. This fall presents a few open weeks for soil tests, grid sampling and fertilizer application, and good 2010 production provides the cash flow to support it. Hamilton Agronomy staff is available for grid sampling, and soil labs are currently providing a quick turn on sampling. Call today to schedule your farm.

Complete Systems Help Deliver Profit

Michigan's soil variability can make seed selection complex. Defensive hybrids work best in some spots, yet offensive in others. According to Hamilton Agronomist Jeff Vander Werff, customers profit most when they turn to Hamilton Agronomy for support with their complete cropping system, from soil sampling and fertility to seed and herbicide programs. "We have greater experience placing seed on an acre than anyone in our market area. We're not focusing on what number is best, but what number is best for your acre," said Vander Werff. "Just because a number is a superstar in a trial, doesn't mean it's going to be a superstar on your farm."

When you plant with the right seed, then compliment it with precise fertility and apply hand-picked herbicides, the synchronized approach supports profit, said Vander Werff. "Growers that rely on us for a complete system achieve better results in our marketplace."



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