



Seed Notes



Central Plains Seed Service Monthly Newsletter

Early Planting Boosts Soybean Yields

Research shows clear benefits to planting soybeans early

For many years, most growers have taken a “corn first, soybeans second” approach to their spring planting. However, research from K-State and other agriculture schools, as well as many on-farm trials, has shown that soybeans should be planted as early as possible for maximum yield.

So what, exactly, is the definition of “early?” For many in this area, that means late April or early May, but studies done by K-State in 2021 and 2022 looked at planting dates of April 4 at the Topeka experiment fields and April 5 for experiment fields at Scandia. For comparison, a second planting of the same varieties was done on April 21 (Topeka) and April 28 (Scandia) with a third planting on May 9 (Topeka) and May 17 (Scandia). Looking at harvest results from those test fields, the April 4-planted soybeans in the Topeka plot out-produced those planted on May 9 by a little more than 5 bu/acre, while in Scandia, one variety of early planted beans out-yielded the late-planted group by about 20 bu/acre! According to KSU Agronomy, results from the 2021 study were similar. To read the entire KSU Agronomy eUpdate you go to https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article_new/effect-of-early-planting-dates-on-soybean-yield-538-3 or use the camera on your smart phone to scan the QR code below.

A recent article in Successful Farming’s online edition echos what K-State found. In the article, grower Matt Miles of McGhee, AR, is quoted as saying “the single most influencing yield enhancer for us is early planting.” Miles says he has pushed planting dates for his 5,000 acre soybean farm up a few weeks each year for the last 10 years. In 2023 he says the planters were rolling by March 15 - too early for those of us here in Central Kansas, but probably similar to the first week of April for this area. The article also claims Miles has planted as early as late February, quoting him as saying

See “Early Planting” on Page 2

Quick-Picks. Useful information worth sharing. Use your smart phone’s camera to open the link

KSU AGRONOMY
Early Soybean Planting

SUCCESSFUL FARMING
Early Soybean Planting

BAYER CROP SCIENCE
Early Soybean Planting

DL Corn Plots

We were able to plant two drylands corn plots in northern Stafford County this year. Here’s how they did.

Variety	Yield
197-70	70.0
199-60	60.7
200-23	70.2
200-48	63.2
204-30	66.3
204-54	74.4
205-63	69.6
207-87	62.6
210-08	70.2
210-46	70.9
211-11	69.5
212-02	74.1

Corn/Soybean School

K-State has announced the dates and a change to the Corn and Soybean Schools held each spring. The two will now be combined into one, and will be held at 4 different location during the third week of January. These events are worth attending. To Register go to <https://kscorn.com/schools/>

EARLY PLANTING

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“We knew that date was really pushing the weather window, but we wanted to see just how far we could go. I continually ask myself how early is too early. I won’t know unless I do my own research. But every time we pushed the planting date earlier, we picked up bushels.”

Miles says that in a field that has traditionally produced 60 bu/acres soybeans, with early planting he has seen yields jump to around 80 bu/acre.

Another grower in the article, Temple Rhodes of Centerville, MD says he has moved the planting dates of his 2,500-acre soybean operation from late May and Early June to the first week of April. Rhodes worried about damage to the soybean seeds planted into colder soils. He claims to have had soybeans sit in the ground for 28 days without emerging, and then when the weather cooperates they’d pop right out of the ground. According to the article, what Rhodes found was that while underground, the soybean was establishing a root system the entire time. “It didn’t die,” he says. “It simply was waiting for warmer weather.”

The full Successful Farming article can be found at [https://www.agriculture.com/how-to-](https://www.agriculture.com/how-to-grow-early-planted-soybeans-8398970)

[grow-early-planted-soybeans-8398970](https://www.agriculture.com/how-to-grow-early-planted-soybeans-8398970) or by scanning the QR code on page 1.

Planting soybeans into cooler soils makes protecting those seeds a must. The use of a seed-applied fungicide/insecticide treatment, as well as micronutrients like magnesium, manganese and iron is essential to protect and promote growth of the seed. According to a Bayer Crop Science article titled “Benefits and Risks of an Early Planted Soybean Crop,” patience is required with early planted soybeans.

“Although the ideal soil temperature for rapid soybean germination and emergence is between 77° and 86°F, soybean seeds can germinate when the soil temperature is about 50°F. However, at cooler soil temperatures, soybean emergence may take as long as two to three weeks.”

The article also encourages selecting quality seed and using seed treated with an insecticide and fungicide to protect them from soil-borne pathogens. The full article can be found at [https://www.cropscience.bayer.us/articles/bayer/benefits-and-risks-of-an-early-planted-soybean-crop#](https://www.cropsscience.bayer.us/articles/bayer/benefits-and-risks-of-an-early-planted-soybean-crop#) or by scanning the QR code on page 1. Central Plains Seed Service can help you select the best variety for your field.

ABOUT CENTRAL PLAINS SEED SERVICE

Started in 2014, Central Plains Seed Service is your Channel Seed source in Barton, Stafford, Pawnee and Rice counties. Located just 7 miles south of Great Bend along US 281 at the Barton/Stafford county line, we offer Channel® Seed as well as seed wheat and cover crop seed from Polansky Seed in Belleville KS and Star Seed in Osborne, KS. We have our own seed treater and can custom treat your soybeans and seed wheat at time of delivery. Speaking of delivery, did you know ours is free? That’s right, we don’t charge to bring the seed to your field. We’ll even load it into your planter! Got your own seed tender or truck? We’ll treat the seed right into your truck or trailer in our indoor facility. No need to wait out in the weather! Come by and see us at 1 NE 210 St, Great Bend, KS, or call 620-617-3213



Tools - Part 1

There's nothing quite like the feel of a high-quality tool in your hand when you've got a project to work on. Even for those who prefer to let the professionals do the fixing around the farm, it's hard to deny that the right tool in your hand can make any job feel so much easier. A stubby ratchet for tight quarters, a good hammer and punch to drive out a stubborn shear pin, or the click of a good torque wrench on that last head bolt can bring a little bit of a smile to the face of the person using it. And don't even get me started on how wonderful and indispensable cordless tools have become!

A mastery of those tools comes with time and practice, and so does the confidence to dive into a complex repair job on an expensive piece of machinery. The first time around it can feel intimidating, and there are pitfalls to be sure. But with equal measures of care and confidence (and a few good YouTube videos!) it's amazing what you can accomplish.

This article, however, isn't about the tools you'll find in your shop or in the back of your truck, but about the tools available to you in the form of computer software.

Now I can hear it already - "I hate computers! And they hate me!" And I'll be the first to admit that they can be the source of incredible frustration. But think about it this way - if you've ever used a wrench, have you ever twisted off a bolt or rounded off a nut? Or bloodied your knuckles? So why so much hatred for a tool like computer software? You're going to have a learning curve, and you're going to have to put up with a few mistakes, but sticking with it and keeping a positive attitude can yield some really satisfying results. Don't believe me? Keep reading.

First, let me make a quick distinction between 'computers' and 'software' since I'm really going to be talking about software from here on out. A 'computer' is just a place to store and use your tools - like a shed on a farm. And in my definition of 'computer' I'm going to include smart phones and tablets as well as laptops or desktop computers. Don't get hung up thinking that a computer has to have a big screen and keyboard. There are powerful computers that you can simply

talk to in order to use them, and you've probably got one in your pocket right now. The 'software' is the collection of tools in that shed. Welders, drill presses, plasma cutters, piston ring compressors, hand tools - you name it there's an amazing variety of tools to do the jobs out there. With computer software there's an amazing variety, too, and when it comes to using software and technology to make your life easier your imagination is about the only limit. So let's look at a quick example. I'll go into more detail in the next part of this article.

Every farmer has to plan, and every farmer has to keep records. Some are better at it than others. Some have already found the perfect system for planning and record keeping. If you want to know how good of a system is in place on the farm, just ask the person that pays the bills and handles tax preparation. They'll tell you if there's room for improvement or not!

Putting together a crop plan can be done on the back of an old envelope, but that may not be the best place, especially for larger farms. Using a tool called a spreadsheet can make things much easier. Spreadsheet software packages you might have heard of include Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets or Apple Computer's Numbers app. They'll all work, and chances are good you already have them or have access to them (Google Sheets is a cloud-based spreadsheet, meaning that there's nothing to install on your device and you only need Internet access to use it.) A spreadsheet for crop planning needs to include a few pieces of information: The name or legal description of the field, the number of acres in the field, the crop you intend to plant for the upcoming growing season, and the population density or seeding rate. Set up each field as a row in your spreadsheet, with the first column being the name of the field, the next being the number of acres, the next column being the crop to be planting and the last column as the seeding rate. Now if you do nothing else but use this as a way to keep a record of what you've planted where you'll be off to a good start, but in the next issue I'm going to show you where the magic really starts to happen, and give some more examples of how you might use these tools on your farm to make life easier. See you next time!

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