I. General Summary

These replicated studies provide information that can be used by Virginia corn growers to make better management decisions on their farms. Refer to individual plots for discussion of results.

This is the second year of replicated tests for optimum plant populations. We saw positive or neutral results to increasing corn populations in the field, depending on site. From this and last year’s data, it seems that final stands around 26,000 are able to make excellent yields where soil type, water, and fertility allow for it. Where poor soils (or in the case of 2007, extreme drought) limit yield potential, populations around 20,000 should be sufficient to optimize yield.

This is also the second year looking at aerial applications of fungicides to corn at the silking/tasseling growth stage. While a couple of sites showed statistically-significant yield increases to fungicides, overall the data was neutral.

Bear in mind that disease pressure was low across eastern Virginia the past two years, so we plan to repeat this experiment next year in case disease pressure is higher.

Corn hybrid selection is as tough as it has ever been. With more seed companies and more GMO options and seed treatment packages than ever before, it can be very difficult to decide which hybrids to plant. This year, extremely dry weather gave us a good look at drought tolerance of specific hybrids.

A seeming result of high corn prices, many new and different products are positioned on the market to increase yields through increased fertilizer availability, seed-applied micronutrients, and the like. This year gave us an opportunity to test a couple of those – WolfTrax and Avail® – with mixed results. Look for more of these product evaluations in coming years.