



ADVANCED AG SYSTEMS'

# Crop Soil News

<http://www.advancedagsys.com/>

October 2020

"It is the crops  
that feed the  
cows that make  
the milk  
which creates  
the money."

"So go the best laid plans of mice and men."

In the July issue we laid out the steps for planting either straight oats or oats plus triticale for a high yield, very high-quality forage harvested the end of September. The best management steps were listed. Unfortunately, we forgot to list doing a rain dance. Instead of 30-inch-tall oats at flag leaf stage the beginning of October, we have stuff that is just over a foot tall. Unless we have July weather in October and November, there is little chance of getting an economical crop. The long term has the Midwest warmer, but not the east. Rather than send more money into a crop that will not make it, the suggestion is to leave it as winter protection for the winter forage planted underneath it. The winter triticale was only a couple of inches shorter than the oats. It is not perfect but you are between a rock and a hard place. Mowing the oats at the end of October instead of the normal end of September, will have significant detrimental effect on the survival and yield next spring of the winter forage planted with it. The suggestion is to maximize the higher yielding winter forage by not harvesting the late oats. It will not smother the winter forage. If you don't have winter forage in with the oats, you may get a very late lower yield at the end of October. If not, the ground will be in great shape next spring to simply come in and plant a seeding into the oat residue, or plant corn. The oat residue will be the consistency of wet tissue paper and I have planted seedings into it using a conventional drill.

There are a number of farms that are short on forage due to the drought/dry conditions. The earliest emergency forage for next spring you can plant is a winter grain. We have been suggesting winter triticale forage for a number of years year due to the higher quality, standability, and yield from the improved varieties on the market, compared to rye or winter wheat. Our management studies the past 10 years confirms that for higher yields from a greater number of tillers, planting early is strongly suggested.

Ok, it is now the beginning of October. Should I give up on winter forage, especially winter triticale? **NO**. Our suggestions of planting early for high yield are being misinterpreted-



The upper picture is fall oats at the end of September under more normal conditions. The lower picture is what we have this year due to the extreme shortage of rainfall in August and September.



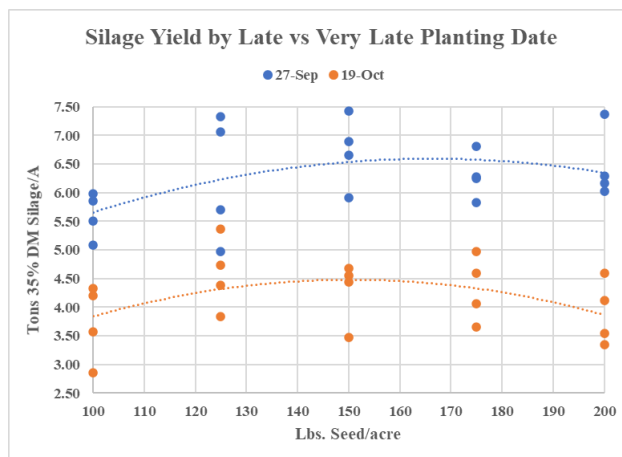
Advanced Ag Systems  
Research, Education, Consulting

ed as you only can plant triticale early or not at all. **THIS IS INCORRECT.** We plant corn about the beginning of May for optimum yield. We also plant on May 15, June 1, and in some really bad years on June 15-20. Yes, yield goes down when we plant corn later, but **YOU DO GET A CROP.** When short on forage you need a crop early as possible.

**WINTER TRITICALE IS NO DIFFERENT.**

There is an optimum time, and then there is the time that each year, soil conditions, and weather leave you. Planting later you still get yield, just somewhat less compared to planting a month earlier. Our plantings in our variety trial were put in September 11 and ran from 3.5 – 4.25 tons of dry matter (10 – 12 tons) of silage/acre. What if we missed that early date as many will this year?

In the graph at the right, a 2006 seeding rate study, we planted somewhat late – September 27 for our “early” date. Note: the September 27 date is actually 3 weeks late for our climatic region (Albany, NY). **We also planted “very late” on October 19.** The October 19 planting date is 6 weeks late! Sort of like planting corn in mid June. Each seeding rate at each date was 4 replications. The average yield of silage was 6.27 tons of 35% DM silage (2.19 tons DM) for the “early” date. The very late date was 33% less and averaged 4.17 tons of 35% DM silage (1.46 tons of DM). In 2015 we repeated the study planting October 17. Again there was no response to seed rate over 100 lbs./A but because of a warm open winter, the mean yield was 3 tons dm/a or over 8.5 tons of silage/acre in the spring.



**REMEMBER: DATE OF PLANTING DOES NOT CHANGE FORAGE QUALITY, ONLY THE QUANTITY.** What farmer would not want to pull off over 4 tons silage/acre (equal in yield to the first cut of a good alfalfa stand) of some of the highest quality forage you can produce, and do it in mid-May when nothing else is ready to harvest? Planting later will mean the crop comes off a little later. It matures about 2 days later for every week later you plant in the fall although newer triticale varieties mature almost as early as winter rye.

If you are planting late **DO NOT INCREASE THE SEEDING RATE.** My replicated research in the above graph found that there is no significant yield increase with increased seed rate – you just spend more money. What does work is to use a 3-way seed treatment. This was discussed in-depth in the **JULY NEWS-LETTER** (click to see July issue). For the late planting date, the **treated seed yielded 28% more** than the control of un-treated seed. The late (October 5) with seed treatment, still gave us 2.8 tons of dry matter (8 tons/ a 35% dm) yield which is a very profitable crop. If you are forced to plant later, **planting depth becomes more critical** as you have smaller root system to keep the plant from heaving out and dying in the spring. Each year people ignore the **1.25 inch** (3.18 cm) deep **minimum planting depth** suggestion and lose the crop over winter. Note: **at this late date** for our area (Albany, NY) and further north, preliminary research indicates that there is **NO response to fall nitrogen** so save your money, just get the seed in the ground at the proper depth as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Thomas Kilcer,  
Certified Crop Advisor

172 Sunnyside Rd  
Kinderhook, NY  
12106

Tel: 518-421-2132

[tfk1@cornell.edu](mailto:tfk1@cornell.edu)

**The Helping  
Hand  
to Better  
Agriculture**

