

Agriculturally Speaking

By RUSSELL C. KING
County Extension Chairman



"Spring Fever." Every year about this time many Warren County gardeners start getting the garden itch. Warm spells this time of year can easily get many of you started too early on your gardens. When you plant too early, some seeds rot; others produce poor plants or the whole stand grows slowly. Soil temperature is the most reliable measurement to consider in planting your garden. Listed below are suggested minimum soil temperatures recommended for seed germination in Warren County.

Radish	45 degrees F
Potato, Irish	45 degrees F
Beets	50 degrees F
Kale	45 degrees F
Garden peas	40 degrees F
Sweet corn	60 degrees F
Snapbeans	55-60 degrees F
Cucumbers	60-65 degrees F
Squash	60-65 degrees F
Watermelon	65-70 degrees F

For more information on gardening, contact the Warren County Agricultural Extension Office.

Deadline Is Nearing

March 31 is the last day to apply for crop insurance for all spring planted corn, cotton, grain sorghum, peanuts, tobacco and soybeans in North Carolina counties, according to District Director Howard Conyers, a representative of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC).

Crop Insurance covers unavoidable loss of production resulting from adverse weather conditions, wildlife, earthquake and fire. Three coverage levels (50 percent, 65 percent and 75 percent) are available for insurance protection. Additionally, FCIC offers three optional price elections for valuing production lost or damaged, Conyers said.

A new crop insurance plan, called Actual Production History (APH), is available this year to producers of corn, cotton, grain sorghum, peanuts, tobacco and soybeans in addition to wheat, barley and oats. Producers of these crops must now qualify for higher yield guarantees by providing their own actual production records or other available sources of information to their insurance agent on or before the sales closing date of March 31.

"With the increased cost of producing a crop, most business-minded farmers are taking a look at this new concept," Conyers commented.

For more information about the APH plan and for those already insured to update their APH records, producers should contact an authorized agent.

Singing Planned

Joseph L. Brown of Littleton will sponsor a gospel sing for the benefit of the Littleton Community Civic Center on Sunday, Feb. 23, at 3 p.m. at McIver School cafeteria in Littleton.

Arnett Manley will serve as master of ceremonies and groups participating will include the Gospel Travelers of Garysburg, Carolina Kings of Townsville and Warrenton Echoes of Warrenton.

Admittance will be by tickets which may be purchased in advance from any member of the Civic Club in Littleton at a cost of \$2 or at the door for \$2.50.

Dates Announced For Sign-up For Farm Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced that the sign-up period for the Conservation Reserve Program will be March 3-14 at the Warren County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office.

ASCS Executive Director Thomas E. Watson said approximately 69.5 million acres will be eligible in the 1986 crop year for entry into the program, a provision of the Food Security Act of 1985 that will take highly erodible land out of farming for 10 years and place it into trees or other permanent vegetative cover.

Enrollment of approximately five million acres is expected in 1986.

The Soil Conservation Service will determine the classification or erosion levels of land, Watson said. All Class 6, 7 and 8 land is eligible along with any land in Classes 2 through 5 that is eroding at three times the tolerance level.

Producers wishing to put land into the program must provide a cropping history covering the years 1981 through 1985, Watson said. The land must have been planted or considered to have been planted during that period

(including land in the Acreage Conservation Reserve or set-aside programs, or land that was in the prevented-planted category).

Set-aside or diverted acres are not eligible for the Conservation Reserve Program. Reserve acreage will be over and above amounts needed to qualify for price support programs.

Watson said producers must submit bids for annual rental payments at the time of application. There will be 50 percent cost-sharing on conservation cover practices. Payments will be either in cash or negotiable (PIK) certificates. There is a \$50,000 per person per year limit on annual rental payments, but not on cost shares.

Bases, quotas and allotments will be reduced by the ratio of cropland on the farm to the amount put into the program. The producer will choose which bases, quotas or allotments will be reduced over the life of the contract, and this history will be preserved over the life of the contract.

The Warren County Agricultural Stabilization and Conserva-

tion Service and Soil Conservation Service offices will have more information before the sign-up period begins, Watson said,

and he urged producers to contact these offices for further details or assistance in determining their eligibility.

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