

## Considering Switching out of Corn due to a delayed spring... Wait a minute!

When spring comes late or wet weather delays field work and planting, corn growers may deliberate on whether to switch to earlier maturing hybrids or to plant a crop other than corn. This is a critical decision that impacts producers' risks and profitability. Switching to early hybrids **too soon or switching away from corn** can result in significant **yield and profit penalties**. Long-term studies by both Pioneer and several universities have shown a clear yield and profit advantage for full season corn hybrids. When planted in a timely fashion, these hybrids can make use of the entire growing season to reach their full yield potential. Even when planted later, full-season hybrids often out-perform early maturing hybrids economically, even when planted later in May. Current economics support corn planting after May 15. Crop insurance provides risk management through and beyond late May. Table 1 provides a comparison of switching from an intended hybrid (in this case 39D97) to an earlier maturing product (represented by P7213R).

*Table 1: Profitability Comparison of switching to earlier maturing hybrids planted after May 15<sup>th</sup> in Mb.*  
(Note: Data taken from Pioneer on-farm trials harvested in Manitoba.)

Year	Pioneer Hybrid	Avg Yield Bu/Ac	Avg % Moisture	Average \$/Acre @ \$5.75/Bu	# of Locs
2009	39D97	141.5	23	\$ 759	14
2010	39D97	129.3	24	\$ 692	24
<b>2 Yr Avg</b>	<b>39D97</b>	<b>135.4</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>\$ 726</b>	<b>38</b>
2009	P7213R	111.2	21.7	\$ 604	15
2010	P7213R	120.4	19.2	\$ 670	11
<b>2 Yr Avg</b>	<b>P7213R</b>	<b>115.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>\$ 637</b>	<b>26</b>

This example illustrates that fuller season hybrids in late may can economically benefit producers. Changing to earlier hybrids too early comes with potential losses.

### Following are key points from Pioneer Hi-Bred and regional university research:

- ◆ **Prior to about May 25** - Plant the normal maturity choices planned for the season.
- ◆ **After about May 25 until June 1** - Consider switching to hybrids with maturities 5 -7 RM units earlier.
- ◆ **From June 1-10** - Consider switching to hybrids with maturities 8 to 10 RM units earlier.
- ◆ Always consider local experience and microclimate factors when selecting relative maturity.

Each grower has a unique situation. Optimum corn relative maturity for a given grower may also be influenced by risk tolerance, drying capacity, storage capacity, desired harvest timing, and other factors. Information in this article is intended to assist growers in making the best corn hybrid relative maturity decisions for their operation.