THE
EARFULL
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RENK • SEED

Focus on Seedbed, Seeding Depth & Early Weed Pressure

As planters roll across the Midwest, conditions are variable—but opportunities are strong. With a large percentage of corn and soybeans going in during this critical planting window, it's important to fine-tune in-field management to make every acre count. Here are a few reminders to help keep your crop on track.

Seeding Depth & Seedbed Conditions

Even when the rush is on, the basics still matter. Uniform emergence starts with consistent depth and good seed-to-soil contact.

- **Corn** should be planted 1.75"–2" deep to ensure access to moisture and encourage strong nodal root development. Too shallow invites rootless corn syndrome—especially if dry weather follows.
- **Soybeans** can go slightly shallower: 1"–1.25"—but the priority is firm placement into moisture.
- Avoid "mudding it in." Sidewall compaction and smeared seed trenches hurt emergence and stunt early roots.

Plot getting planted near Burwell, NE.

Weed Pressure is Rising

With warm temperatures and recent moisture in many areas, early weed flushes will happen. These can silently steal yield in the first 3 weeks after emergence if not kept in check.

- **Layer residuals:** A strong pre-emerge herbicide with residual activity helps keep fields clean until canopy.
- **Be aggressive with escapes:** If weeds are emerging in planted fields, make a plan now to address them post emerge.
- **Trait match matters:** Make sure your herbicide plan aligns with your Renk corn or soybean product.

The Bottom Line:

Seed has shipped (in the most part) but the decisions you make right now—as you push forward planting corn and soybeans—has a lasting impact. Stay sharp, check often, and lean on your Renk team for support through this critical stretch!

Sources: Information referenced from Purdue University Extension's "Critical Period for Weed Control in Corn and Soybeans," Iowa State University's Integrated Crop Management newsletter on corn planting depth and emergence, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln CropWatch guidance on soybean planting depth. Always follow herbicide labels and match trait platforms with appropriate crop technologies.

Tracking Corn Development by GDUs

Understanding the GDU Importance

As planting progresses, keeping track of Growing Degree Units (GDUs) helps anticipate key development stages and make timely agronomic decisions. Below is a simple breakdown of corn growth stages across a range of maturities, from early (82 RM) to full-season (116 RM) hybrids.

Growth Stage	82–116 RM GDU Ranges	Notes
Emergence (VE)	90–120 GDU	Soil temperature driven; same across all RMs
V6 (Rapid Growth Begins)	450–550 GDU	Start of rapid nutrient uptake and canopy development
Tassel (VT)	1050–1350 GDU	Longer RM tassels later, often 7–10 days after early RM
Silking (R1)	1150–1450 GDU	Most sensitive yield stage; longer RM hybrids silk later
Blister (R2)	1450–1750 GDU	Kernel fertilization and early development
Milk (R3)	1700–2100 GDU	Starch accumulation intensifies
Dough (R4)	1900–2300 GDU	Starch begins to firm; kernel size developing
Dent (R5)	1950–2550 GDU	Dry matter fill continues; black layer begins forming
Physiological Maturity (R6)	2150–2900 GDU	Black layer formed; harvestable grain; yield is fixed

Simple Tools to Track GDUs

Use these grower-friendly apps and websites to monitor GDUs and make better field decisions throughout the season:

- **Purdue U2U GDD Tool** – Map-based regional GDU insights https://mrcc.purdue.edu/tools/corngdd
- **FieldView (Climate)** – GDU tracking by hybrid & field, rainfall, crop models
- **OneSoil** – Visual NDVI & GDU tracking by field boundary

Tracking GDUs throughout the season provides a clear roadmap for corn development and helps guide timely decisions on nutrient management, scouting, and harvest planning. Whether you're working with an early 82 RM hybrid or a full-season 116 RM, understanding the GDU range and key growth stages ensures you're always one step ahead in maximizing crop potential. Pairing this knowledge with simple digital tools makes it easier than ever to stay informed and in control all season long.

Sources: GDU ranges and stage timings are based on data from University of Illinois Extension, Iowa State University Extension, Purdue U2U GDD Tool, University of Nebraska–Lincoln CropWatch, and agronomic insights from Dr. R.L. (Bob) Nielsen at Purdue.