THE EARFULL
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The Second Week of Corn Observations

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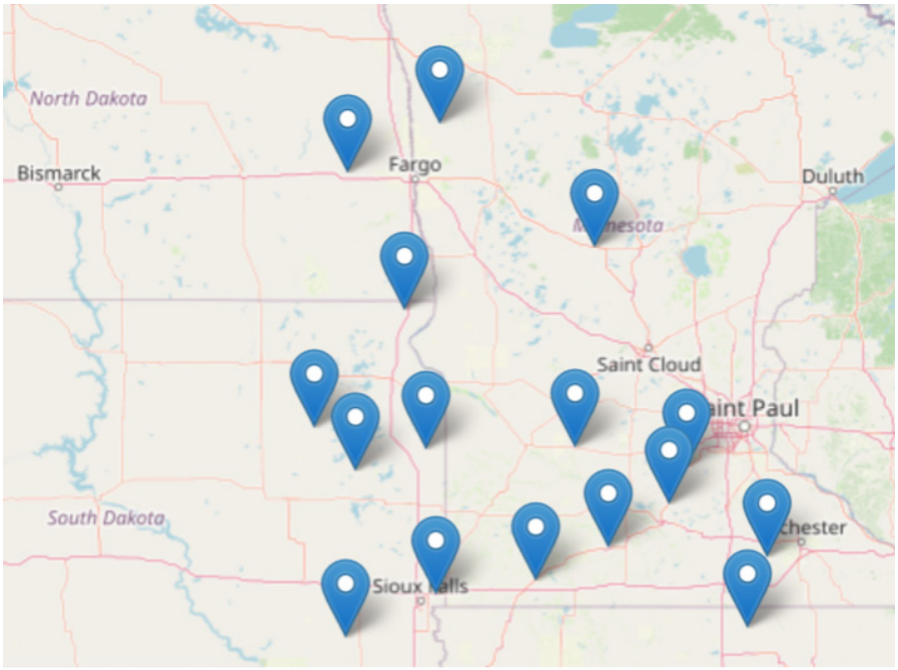

Last week's travels through our Northwest Renk research locations offered a vivid look at how our genetics perform under real-world conditions. Southern Minnesota once again acted as a pressure cooker for corn diseases. Southern rust, northern leaf blight, crown rot, stalk rots, and even pockets of tar spot were common. In several plots these diseases drove premature death, particularly in certain product segments. Yet, even with the high disease load, the overall corn crop remained strong, proving the depth of yield potential in many of our hybrids. Locations that received an R1 fungicide application stood out even more, showing excellent yield potential and a dramatic reduction in visible disease infection. In these fields disease symptoms still appeared, but too late to cause yield loss. Stalk evaluations at black layer also provided valuable insight into late-season standability and stalk strength.

Alongside the disease challenges, a series of weather events left their mark. Early storms triggered green snap at lower nodes and root lodging in some plots, while late-season winds caused stalk breakage and plants leaning just as they were finishing grain fill. This combination of disease pressure and weather stress created a true proving ground for our pipeline and is already shaping decisions about which products advance in the Renk bag.

In South Dakota, the disease mix shifted. Goss's wilt was present at several sites, and fields that caught excessive rainfall showed shorter plants, crown rot, ghosted plants, and weak stalks. These extremes underscored the importance of selecting hybrids that can handle wet soils and maintain standability under prolonged moisture and wind.

As I moved north, the corn generally turned healthier. Stands were stronger, canopies fuller, and overall plant appearance much improved compared to southern sites. Even in Buffalo, however, we still observed early green snap and late root lodging—proof that no region is completely spared from weather impacts.

These observations are far more than numbers in an Excel file. They are a living scorecard for our genetics and management practices. Hybrids that withstand disease, stay upright through unpredictable weather, and maintain green leaf late into the season are the ones we move forward. The insights from this trip will directly influence the next generation of Renk corn products, ensuring that growers have hybrids built to perform under stress and still deliver top-end yield potential. No product is bulletproof, but understanding the risks gives us a clearer picture of how to position and protect each hybrid for success.

RK7590SSPRO

Relative Maturity: 109 Day **Trait Platform:** SmartStax® PRO RIB Complete®

Key Characteristics:

- Agronomically strong hybrid that translates into big yield wins.
- Performs best in tilled fields and with open seedbeds.
- Excellent fit across Renk's sales area.

Placement & Populations:

- Best at **28–32k populations**.
- Soil fit: **7/9 on coarse | 8/9 on fine**.

Yield Environment Ratings:

- High yield: **9**
- Medium yield: **8**
- Low yield: **7**

RK7577SSPRO

Relative Maturity: 107 Day **Trait Platform:** SmartStax® PRO RIB Complete®

Key Characteristics:

- Outstanding yield potential with strong agronomics.
- Exceptional emergence and vigor for rapid early growth.
- Broad east-to-west adaptability.

Placement & Populations:

- Best at **30–34k populations**.
- Soil fit: **7/9 on coarse | 8/9 on fine**.

Yield Environment Ratings:

- High yield: **9**
- Medium yield: **9**
- Low yield: **8**

RK6545PCE

Relative Maturity: 102 Day **Trait Platform:** PowerCore® Enlist®

Key Characteristics:

- Impressive yield performance across environments.
- Superior seed emergence and vigor.
- Broad adaptability east to west.

Placement & Populations:

- Best at **30–34k populations**.
- Soil fit: **8/9 on coarse | 8/9 on fine**.

Yield Environment Ratings:

- High yield: **9**
- Medium yield: **9**
- Low yield: **8**