

*News Article*

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## How to grow a lousy stand of corn

As the title implies, most of the information shared below will be offered tongue-in-cheek, and it originates from Purdue's corn expert, Dr. Bob Nielsen. As corn planting season nears, a lousy stand of corn is certainly what every farmer plans against. Below are the ingredients to a recipe from Dr. Nielsen's pen for what he calls a "crappy" stand of corn:

- \* One (1) field, level and poorly drained.
- \* Wait until the last possible moment to burn down any winter annual weeds or cover crops.
- \* Plant one (1) or more hybrids of your choice, but preferably ones with poor seed quality and low vigor.
- \* Do NOT add any starter fertilizer to the recipe.
- \* However, an ample amount of starter fertilizer placed right next to the seed will add a little "zing" to the recipe.
- \* Add a dash of seed rot or seedling blight organisms.
- \* Add a pinch of wireworms or seedcorn maggots.
- \* Plenty of spring tillage to maximize soil compaction, though one pass with a disc will suffice if the soil is "on the wet side" when worked.
- \* Flavor with acetanilide or growth regulator herbicides as desired.
- \* Add minimum of one inch of rain per week after planting to maintain saturated soil conditions.
- \* Top off with one or more severe frost events to provide a nice, crisp appearance to the plants.

Nielsen continues with his recipe: "Mix well and plant as early as possible no matter how cold or wet the soils. Maintain average daily soil temperatures at 50°F or less for three weeks or more after planting. Plant 'on the wet side' to ensure good sidewall compaction. Plant either excessively deep or excessively shallow. Plant as fast as you possibly can to ensure uneven seed drop. For best results, follow corn with corn, especially with minimal fall tillage. Top off with a thick soil crust and serve cold."

Nielsen has a few other clever quips added to his full article, which you can access at:

<http://www.kingcorn.org/news/timeless/CrappyStands.html>.

For additional information on all things corn, and more on the serious side, visit Nielsen's Chat 'N Chew Café website at: [www.kingcorn.org/cafe](http://www.kingcorn.org/cafe). Also, The Corn Growers' Guidebook is available at: [www.kingcorn.org](http://www.kingcorn.org).

For timely information on all crops and pests, check out the Purdue *Pest & Crop* newsletter, published weekly through the growing season, at: <https://extension.entm.purdue.edu/newsletters/pestandcrop/>.

Finally, as nitrogen fertilizer is one of the significant and costly variable input products added to corn, it pays to be as efficient as possible with it. For guidance, Nielsen and colleague Dr. Jim Camberato updated their white paper in 2017 entitled, "Nitrogen Management Guidelines for Corn in Indiana," available at:

<https://www.agry.purdue.edu/ext/corn/news/timeless/NitrogenMgmt.pdf>.

Good luck to all, and here's hoping for a great corn crop in 2018!

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