

# Record bean crop hits 155 bu. yield

**M**ISSOURI farmer Kip Cullers has done it again. With a yield of 154.74 bushels per acre, he has set a new world record for soybean production, topping the record of 139.39 bushels per acre he set in 2006.

Cullers, who farms near Stark City, Mo., harvested the 154.74-bushel-per-acre beans on Oct. 6 from a 40-acre field. The yield average, confirmed by the Missouri Soybean Association, is 15.35 bushels per acre higher than what he harvested from the same field in 2006.

To put the new record in perspective, consider that Iowa farmers harvested a 2007 soybean crop estimated to average 52 bushels per acre, according to USDA.

"The beans [last] year did a little better than I expected," says Cullers. In August, he wasn't sure the beans were putting on enough pods at the top of the plants to produce a record

## Key Points

- New world soybean yield record is 155 bushels per acre.
- Southwest Missouri farmer Kip Cullers set the record.
- He says planting best genetics for your farm is the key.

yield. "But the plant health of these beans was excellent, and this variety, Pioneer 94M80, fits my farm well. It ended up with a lot of pods," he says.

Cullers planted the same variety in 2006 and sprayed Headline fungicide both years.

"A big factor in the 2007 yield was the Monosem planter I used to plant the beans this past spring. It did a better job of seed placement than the drill I had been using," he adds.

In 2007, he had a population of 220,000 plants per acre when the beans were 6 inches tall. That wasn't as high as the final population of 245,000 plants per acre he had in the field in

2006. The plant population difference seemed to have little impact on the outcome.

With the Monosem planter, Cullers planted 300,000 soybean seeds per acre in twin rows spaced 7.5 inches apart. The rows are on 30-inch centers. The field was conventionally tilled and irrigated.

## Irrigation helped

Besides providing water, the irrigation helps keep the plants cool, he says. The field did not receive any rain from early July until the end of August. The air temperature soared to above 100 degrees F in August.

In addition to Headline fungicide, Warrior insecticide was applied. Cullers says Pioneer 94M80 is a 4.8-maturity bean that has the Roundup Ready gene and is resistant to soybean cyst nematode.

## Top genetics

Cullers is often asked by



**NO TRICK:** Kip Cullers says there's no magic to big yields. "It's about details and a systems approach to soybean management."

other growers what they should do to get high yields. He says the No. 1 requirement is to plant the best genetics for your area.

No. 2 is to protect the plants with a fungicide program.

"There are a lot of management details you need to pay attention to," he notes.

Palle Pedersen, Iowa State University Extension agronomist, visited Cullers' farm last fall. Pedersen has broken the 100-bushel soybean yield barrier the past two years in plots

he has managed for high yields on a farm in western Iowa.

Pedersen says he was most impressed that Cullers was able to keep flowers on his plants for nearly 90 days, producing incredible pod set.

Cullers' soil is well-drained.

"Our soils in Iowa are our biggest limitation to having high soybean yields. Our soils don't drain well, and we have to fight a lot of soil pathogens," says Pedersen. "Kip understands his fields and is aware of yield-limiting variables."

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