

# Cotton Planting Dates

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## **PORTAGEVILLE, MO.**

In a five year planting date study from 2001-2005, data supports a trend of reduced yield when cotton is planted later in the season. What happens when cotton is planted early?

Every year when the temperatures start to rise in mid April, producers get anxious to plant especially with the 100% replant programs offered by seed companies. In years the temperature stays warm and soil temperatures are above 65°F, producers will “hit a homerun”. Insects tend to be attracted to the later cotton avoiding the more mature, earlier planted fields. The earlier planting dates will accumulate more heat units resulting in earlier cutout and harvest. Another advantage of an early planting date is

availability of nitrogen from the pre-plant application.

When weather doesn't cooperate, early planted cotton usually has to be replanted. This year (2011) in particular, from April 19 to April 25 daytime temperatures were in the 80s and night time temperatures stayed in the 60s. Many acres were planted during this time. On April 26, rainfall occurred and temperatures dropped which resulted in sick, diseased plants. This field day tour takes a look at early planted, sick, disease cotton that was not replanted. Δ

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