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Survey Participants Respond Favorably to ICM News

By Sorrel Brown, Ag and Natural Resources Extension

ICM News subscribers, earlier this year, we asked you to respond to an online survey on the Integrated Crop Management News to find out how you value the research information that is provided. We are pleased to say 624 subscribers responded. The breakdown by profession showed that 76 percent of you indicated producer and agribusiness agronomist as your primary occupations. Other respondents included government employees, educators and independent crop consultants. The majority of respondents were from Iowa, with some from surrounding states and other countries.

Key points from the survey include:

- 95.5 percent said ICM News made them aware of methods to improve their or a client's farming operation.
- 96 percent reported that ICM News made them more confident in making agronomic decisions or recommendations.
- 89 percent indicated ICM News influenced them to take action in making or recommending a change in farming practices.
- 83.7 percent said ICM News prompted them to seek out additional resources on a topic.
- 89.1 percent indicated they had shared ICM News information with as many as 50 other people.
- 89 percent said they found enough value in ICM News that they would recommend to others.

A sampling of practices that have been modified includes:

- Using the ISU Nitrogen Rate Calculator to fine-tune corn nitrogen management
- Increasing plant densities
- Using economic thresholds in insect scouting to determine if/when to spray
- Harvesting late soybeans as grain rather than forage (decision paid off)
- Encouraging the adaptation of strip-till
- Not spraying for soybean aphid until needed
- Using more moderate temperatures to dry specialty corn
- Not entering a field early to avoid compaction problems
- Planting fuller season soybeans in late season (with favorable results)
- Better manure application management on corn
- Eliminating fall herbicide application
- Reducing tillage on flooded ground
- Testing for soybean cyst nematode

The implications of the survey are that the applied research on crop

production and protection that is presented in the Integrated Crop Management News is highly valued and plays an important part in the decision-making that occurs in Iowa row crop farming operations. Better informed decisions are more likely to have positive economic, emotional, and environmental consequences.

Sorrel Brown is a program evaluator for Ag & Natural Resources Extension and Agricultural Education & Studies at Iowa State University.

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