Marion’s Top Tips for Harvesting Narrow Row Corn

1. It's best to harvest 15-inch rows with a 15-inch row corn head, especially in research plots. If a 15-inch corn head is not available, you can use a 30-inch row head, which pulls two 15-inch rows together, but there is greater potential for ear loss. Avoid this potential ear loss by cutting ground speed. Harvesting early, and using BT hybrids.

2. Farmers claim they can harvest "downed corn" easier with 15 and 20-inch row headers than with 30 and 36-inch row headers.

3. Finding the rows at harvest can be challenging in severely windblown 15 and 20-inch corn. Utilization of white corn head dividers snouts, guidance systems and auto header height are all helpful when harvesting in these conditions.

4. Farmers say 15 and 20-inch corn heads can pick in any direction.

5. Shorter divider snouts are available for use on contours.

6. Farmers claim they can harvest faster in 15 and 20-inch rows.

7. The yield advantage for narrower rows occurs every year but at different levels.

8. 100 percent of farmers with single chain corn heads stated they performed as well if not better than 2 chain corn heads.

9. Since machinery cost can be higher the yield advantage must be large enough to cover the cost and still have some money left over to make it profitable. At our farm we feel it takes 5 bushels per acre to make it profitable.

10. The financial advantage of moving to 15 or 20-inch rows is determined by a math equation, which takes multiple factors into account, such as: acres, one planter/two crops, one corn head/two row spacings, cost to modify equipment and savings in weed and erosion control.