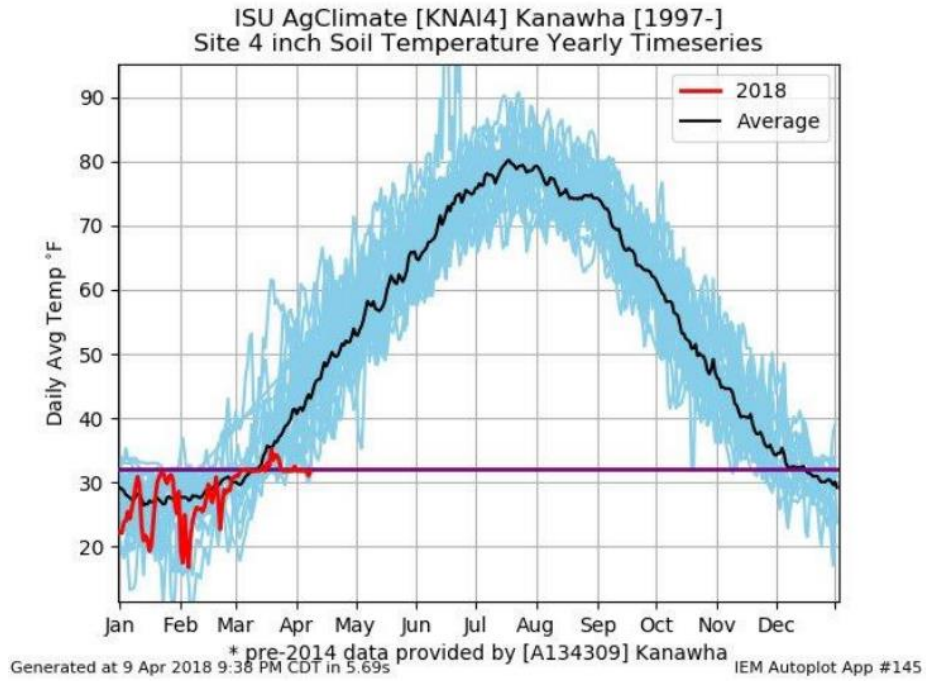
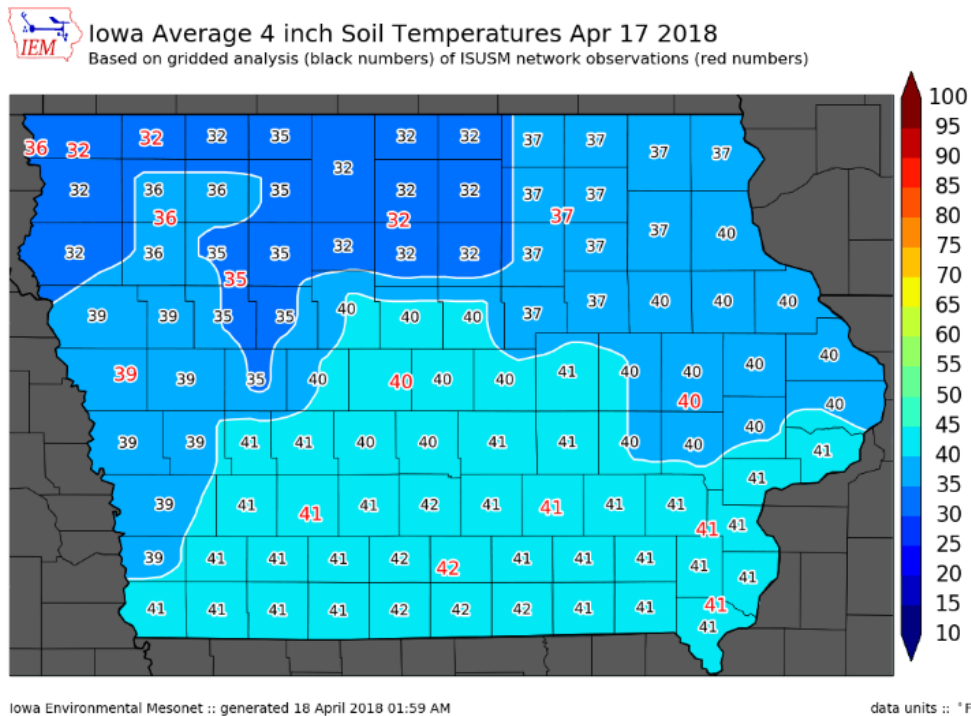


Hybrid Relative Maturity...Too Early to Change

April 2018 is on track to go down in the record books for unusually cold weather. The graph below depicts the 4" soil temperature in 2018 vs the 20-year average as of April 9th.



With the last round of cold air and snowfall over the weekend, soils are too cold to plant, and remain well below average for mid-April.



While the current weather scenario is not ideal for this time of year; I strongly suggest not jumping the gun on switching to earlier corn relative maturities. Hybrid selection was determined through careful planning and thought for yield potential vs soil type, pests, rotation, etc.

As a rule, corn will progress through growth stages more quickly the later planted it is, and it will require less GDU's to reach physiological maturity as planting is delayed. For every day planting is delayed after May 1st in central IA, Iowa State University estimates that corn requires 6.8 GDU's less to reach black layer than it normally would.¹ For example, A6499STXRIB is a 112RM hybrid requiring ~2800 GDU's to reach black layer planted in mid-late April. However, if A6499STXRIB was planted on May 15, the same hybrid would only require approximately 2700 GDU's to reach maturity (2800-(6.8 x 14d)).

Average GDU accumulation near Fort Dodge, Iowa for the month of April is between 30-40 GDU's. Corn requires approximately 125 GDU's to germinate; in other words, we are not losing out on many GDU's by not planting in April on an average year. The graphics below from AdvantageAcre depict how cold Fort Dodge has been in April 2018 vs Last Year and the 27-year average. The long-term outlook for May remains warmer and drier than average, this is a very good thing as many in Western IA stare at snow in their fields on April 18th!




Apr 2018	Forecast	Average	Last Year
Days Below 30F	2	0	1
Days Below 50F	11	13	12
Days Above 80F	0	0	0
Days Above 90F	0	0	0
GDU	54	35	129
Average Temp	38.7°F	49.7°F	51.6°F
Precipitation	3.2"	3.1"	1.6"

May 2018	Forecast	Average	Last Year
Days Below 30F	0	0	0
Days Below 50F	10	15	21
Days Above 80F	0	0	8
Days Above 90F	0	0	0
GDU	379	328	320
Average Temp	62.2°F	60.6°F	60°F
Precipitation	2.7"	3.6"	2.6"

My recommendation is to keep the faith on selected corn hybrids and relative maturity decisions until May 15th, at a minimum. If we get to May 15th and the 10-day forecast continues to remain wet through May 25th; that is the time to begin the discussion to move to an earlier maturing corn hybrid. If you can get your corn planted into good soil conditions before May 25th, you are likely better off sticking with the yield potential and placement considerations of your original order.

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¹ Elmore, R. and Abendroth, L. 2009. Assessing corn stands for replanting. Iowa State University. Integrated Crop Management News. <http://www.extension.iastate.edu>