

Farm Management Minute

The Picket Fence Stand

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Farmers are always searching for high return, low investment management practices that can help the bottom line. Accurate seed placement is one of those relatively simple tasks that can bring huge rewards once you enter the field. In the high cost climate of producing row crops, every effort should be made to get that seed spaced correctly to achieve the optimal return in bushels. Planter meter calibration can be accomplished now during our 'down time', and will reap results later.

Misplaced plants, missing plants and/or extra plants in the row will affect yield. According to a study conducted by Doerge and Hall, if the aggregate plant spacing standard deviation in a commercial field is improved by only one inch, the resulting yield benefit would be about 3.4 bushels per acre! With soybeans over \$13 and corn near \$6/bu, it just makes good sense to insure that your planting equipment is able to plant the 'picket fence.' It is certainly one of those high return, low investment practices that will support your bottom line.