

The Importance of Record Keeping

Record keeping is a topic few producers care to discuss or do. It can be time consuming and take valuable time away from field work. However, it is becoming a critical task in production agriculture. Currently, government agencies, lenders, and insurance companies are requiring better and more accurate records. Not only bushels per acre, income and expenses, but also weather records are becoming increasingly necessary.

From the business aspect of the operation, record keeping is needed for future analysis of production methods, cropping history, and decision making. Record keeping provides valuable information concerning what worked and what did not and possibly, the reasons why something did not turn out as planned. As we all know, the best production methods and hybrids can fail do to weather conditions. Keeping daily records of precipitation and high and low temperatures is easy to accomplish and you can have a fairly accurate weather station for as little as \$25. A high/low thermometer, rain gauge, something to record them on, and about ten minutes a day is all that is needed.

One set of accurate records should be enough to satisfy all of your needs. If you keep good records of production, expenses, income, and weather, you should have all of the required information for any purpose, from crop insurance to lenders to your own needs. You should be able to make informed conclusions regarding the past and to plan for the future. Good records lead to better decisions and hopefully higher returns.

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