BILL: And welcome into another week of our Ag Talk programs. This is Bill Rice along with Ed Lentz. Ed, good morning to you. We start the week by talking about the growth stage for corn.

ED: Growth stage is important, Bill, cause we have management decisions that we do or should have done by a certain stage. We can see at the proper time for those steps by knowing the management. So I just want to briefly go over how do we stage corn out there. And also when they call an agronomist or seed salesman they will ask them what is the growth stage of your corn and they can give them the correct answer by knowing this. You know corn is kind of like a computer, it works very distinctive things that occur for certain events, and until it tassels everything is considered a vegetative stage so we give it the letter V as in Victor to designate that vegetative stage. When that corn first appears, it breaks out of the ground we call that the VE stage for emergence. It takes about 120 growing degree days to get there depending on what the weather is that can be anywhere from a week to two weeks. And then as soon as we get the first leaf and how we determine how we get the first leaf, you know usually you can see several leaves in that whirl, well every time a leaf gets a collar we count that. And what that means is if you look at the back of the oldest leaf it will have a faint line and that’s what we mean by a collar. So when that collar occurs on that first leaf we call that V1. And you can always tell you got the first leaf over a later leaf cause it’s the only leaf on the corn plant that’s going to have a rounded tip. All the later leaves are going to have a pointed tip. So you know if you got the first leaf cause of that round tip. And then of course as we get the next collar on the second leaf we are at V2 and so forth all the way up to tasseling. But for now I wanted to talk about these early stages the V1 through V6. And to keep in mind each leaf collars in about the 66th growing degree day or if the temperatures are doing well every two to three days sometimes five if it’s a cold day we’ll get a new leaf. But the critical stage is the V6 stage when we get the sixth collared leaf cause that’s when that growing point moves above the soil surface. The plant at that time is switched from its seedling roots, it’s gone to its crown roots, it’s going to take nutrients now from its crown roots or permanent roots rather than its seedling roots. We are going to have rapid growth beginning at that time. It’s going to need a lot of nitrogen. So, anything happens from V6 on, if it gets chewed off by a groundhog you may lose the plant, so that’s why it’s important to know where we are at with these stages. We generally reach V6 about four to six weeks after emergence depending on the temperatures whether it’s warm or cooler. So if the farmers knows these things they can go out there and see what their corn plant is doing and start think about management practices.

BILL: Thank you Ed. For Ag Talk this is Bill Rice along with Ed Lentz. Good morning to you.

Ed: Good morning.