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Doug Biswell

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Ampride -

Chad Christiansen

Westmoreland -

Chris Parker

Our Mission:

To be your business of choice, meeting customer needs, and growing a viable, progressive company.

**“In Business
For Your Business”**

Westmoreland Station

By Chris Parker

It's time for yard work, and we have a complete line of Lawn Science fertilizers as well as 50 lb. bags of 13-13-13, 18-46-0, and 46-0-0. Adequate fertilization is essential in helping your lawn reach its full potential. Fertilizer will encourage new growth, generating a much lusher, thicker lawn. Now is the time to get that garden started.



Once again we have Burpee Flower and Gardening seeds available. Thank you for your continued support.

Reminder – April 22, 2008
*Administrative Professionals
(Secretary's) Day*

Alta Vista

By Deb Glessner



Stop in to see our new selection of Flower Hanging Baskets, Bedding Flowers, Tomato and Pepper Plants.

(HINT: Secretary's like flowers).

ENERGY DEPARTMENT

By Chad Christiansen

With the temperatures warming up and producers starting to get back into the fields, we have stopped the RFD delivery of #1 diesel for the winter blends. All the deliveries after this point will be Fieldmaster, or Roadmaster premium diesel fuel. Customers on RFD who utilize the consumption billing feature will see up to 3 or 4 dyed diesel product lines on their billing. Do not be alarmed, this is due to the fact that each product that goes into your tank needs to be itemized. In any given tank there could be diesel with the winter additive, #1 dyed diesel, and regular dyed diesel; this could be the same with clear diesel as well. Depending on your fuel

consumption this spring and summer you could see these items for several statements. If you have any questions what so ever feel free to call.

What makes this the best Warranty in Agriculture?

Covers new equipment for up to 10 years or 10,000 hours *Covers a wide variety of equipment *No deductible *Minimal enrollment fee *No operator "burden of proof" *Transferable

When you use Ruby Fieldmaster® Soy-Enhanced Premium Diesel and Cenex® lubricants exclusively, you'll get up to 10 years or 10,000 hours of engine and transmission coverage. Whether you buy new or used equipment, you simply won't find a better way to protect your investment. That's because this warranty gives you unsurpassed coverage while helping to ensure that only high-quality energy products go into your equipment.

Call Chad @ 785.313.0532

Patron Access - By Tony Hieger

During the spring planting time have you have wondered at night how much fertilizer do I have left on prepaid. You may now sign up for Patron Access on line and look at your account 24 hours day at home from your computer. You may sign up on line at www.manhattan.coop. Once you are signed up you can check your account online anytime you want.

CFA Input Finance Program

The deadline for financing your wheat was April 1st, the deadline for Beans and Corn will be May 15th, If you have any questions about the input financing program please feel free to call Jerry Humbert.

WATTS BOX by John Watts

UNCOMMITTED ACRES? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? MARKETS GOT YOU CONFUSED? ? ? ? ? ?

We have an excellent supply of corn, soybean, milo, and forage seed available to fill any needs that you may have. With the volatility in the grain markets, we can assist you in making the most economical decision for any uncommitted acres. Your Farmers Coop Association prides itself by going the extra mile to aid in any decisions that are being made for your operation. The goal of our knowledgeable sales staff is to provide the best service and agronomic advice to our producers that are available. We spend countless hours and dollars receiving training, attending field days, and walking fields and plots to gain the most and latest knowledge on agronomic practices and genetics. Please don't hesitate to call or contact us with any needs or concerns.

Be on the lookout for upcoming meetings and information on the Winfield Solutions/Croplan Genetics Answer Plot that we sponsor at Wamego!!!

Thanks for your support and patronage!

John Watts
785-313-1644

Grain Comments by Doug Biswell

We have entered the time of the year when historically it is a good time to be pricing some new crop grain. I am at a slight disadvantage writing my comments before the March 31 USDA planting intentions/stocks report but I don't think there will be any major surprises in that report. Many private forecasters have already begun have already started "guessing" how many acres U.S. producers are going to plant to beans and corn, and how much grain the U.S. has on hand. At this point a reduction of corn acres and an increase in bean acres is being priced into the market. I am a little concerned with some acres which are missing from the total planted last year. There have been some CRP acres which have come out of that program last fall and where the USDA may try to put those. Argentina is still having issues with a farmer strike which has continued to shift export business to the U.S. that normally during this time of the year has shifted south. I do not have to tell those livestock producers out there that it has been a struggle to make things work here in the United States and if not of the bean exports our bean price could be significantly lower. Domestic bean crushers are struggling, at these price levels, to make any money. We can look at what has happened to the ethanol business in the last 8 months to get an idea of what those processors will do if the margins continue to be poor and that is to scale back their production capacity. The weather has become more favorable in the Hard Wheat areas of the U.S. and has certainly been reflected in the price for wheat. It is finally spring time and the weather as always will be the main driver in the commodity markets now through the growing season. We saw historically high prices last year that will not be the case this year. Don't let what happen last year cloud your marketing decisions this year.

CROP PRODUCTION BY KEN DIEHL

Spring is really starting off with a bang ice and snow one day and sunshine and warmth the next day, it leaves as fast as it arrives. Though we call it a pain at first, this will provide us with additional moisture to get our first spring crops started.

Hopefully by now most of you have your plans firmly in place, if not please give us a call so we can help you get those plans finalized. The wheat has really taken off with these warm temperatures and good moisture. So far that has not much been said about diseases in wheat the only real problem have been brown mites in the western part of the state killing wheat because of the dry conditions which they favor.

We have had some guys taking about an actual pre emerge in front of their soybeans this year. I will be recommending something like Prowl H20 (mainly for grass control), Prefix (a grass and broadleaf preventative), Scepter (a broadleaf preventative for sunflowers and cocklebur but it can also help with control of volunteer RR corn) or Boundary (a grass and broadleaf preventative).

Thanks again for your patronage and continued business.

Easter Facts:

The Easter Lilly symbolizes the resurrection of Jesus because the shell represents the tomb of Jesus and the flower that blooms represents life after death.

The maiden chocolate eggs recipes were made in Europe in the nineteenth century.

Most children (74%) eat the ears of their chocolate bunny first. 13% eat the feet first, and 10% eat the tails first.

The initial baskets of Easter were given the appearance of bird's nests.



Management by Darin Marti

Your Coop's annual meeting was held March 30 at the Houston Street Ballroom in Manhattan. Three director positions held by Hal Mayer, Tony Akin and Allan Holiday were up for re-election. They were re-elected. Chairman Hal Mayer reported on the board activities for the year and your manager discussed the issues that caused a substantial financial loss. Parts of that discussion are printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Also speaking at the meeting was Dr. Jerry Jaax. Dr. Jaax is Associate Vice President for Research and the university veterinarian for Kansas State University. He gave an informative speech about the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) that is proposed to be located on the KSU campus. The Coop has not taken a stance on this facility but felt that it was important for the membership to be further informed of the risks and benefits.

Even though 2008 was not a profitable year for your coop, I feel this new year has great potential to be successful. We have carried substantial grain bushels over in open storage and other than fertilizer and petroleum, all other revenue generating products performed well last year. In addition, we expect several expense items to be lower in 2009.

As always, a successful year is dependant on how well our employees provide you with the services you need and in turn how well you support them. I am

convinced that when we all work together, we will be assured of great success. Thank you in advance for your support!

EXCERPT FROM MANAGER'S ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

As has already been eluded too, we lost a substantial amount of money in fertilizer in 2008. Our typical buying pattern for many years has been to purchase the following season's needs in the summer or into fall. This means that in the spring or summer of 2008, we purchased our fall of 08 and part of the spring of 09 needs. In a normal situation, we would have then rode the market up into the spring which allowed us to recognize a reasonable margin while also holding the cost down to you the producer.

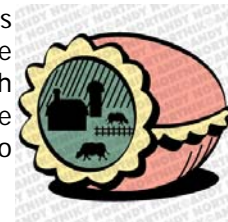
The situation this past summer was this: Fertilizer prices were high and climbing higher. Suppliers were telling us that prices would continue higher and supplies could be tighter due to increasing demand in China and India. Much of the nitrogen used in the US is imported, so that added to our supply concerns. We took this information to heart and made the decision to purchase fertilizer last summer to insure a supply for our customers and at a price that we anticipated would be lower than market at the time you needed it. In a matter of a month after we finished our buying, grain prices began to tank, fuel prices tumbled and fertilizer demand world wide fell to about zero. We, along with most other dealers around the Midwest, were stuck. Prices had been cut in 1/2. Proper accounting methods require us to value our inventory at cost or current market, whichever is lowest. Current market was lower than cost at our fiscal yearend. Obviously, the only way we were going to sell our fertilizer was to cut price below cost which resulted in the large loss you see on our financial statements. The only consolation we have found is that many other dealers have faced the same situation, some with larger losses and some with much less. For the most part, only those dealers that could not borrow money to

purchase inventory, were spared from this pain.

Risk management seems to be the new buzz word the past few years and is more so now for your cooperative. With grain, it is very easy to hedge our ownership and pretty much keep risk to a minimum. Petroleum products can be hedged but only in large amounts so this really leaves us open on the inventory in our tanks and we did lose some value in that inventory last fall when the price fell so quickly. Fertilizer on the other hand does not offer a very viable protection mechanism to us. There is the derivative market that can be used but they are not very liquid and even they have become a dirty word in recent months.

Your board and management will have some serious decisions to make this summer as to how much risk the coop can afford to take when it comes to purchasing fertilizer. We probably will be asking you to take on some of this risk. And really, you do have the ability to protect this risk much better than the coop has. You have the ability to sell new crop grain and lock in profits when you purchase the fertilizer. The other alternative for the coop is to simply not buy fertilizer until you are ready for it and are willing to take delivery. This is not a good option simply because of the time it takes to order and take delivery in a timely fashion. Furthermore, supply may be nonexistent since everyone will need it at the same time.

One interesting note to make is that even though the Coop had an overall loss for the year, we will be paying patronage on 2008 business. I know this is really kind of crazy, but that was our best option from a cash standpoint. Our friendly IRS man would not let us deduct the loss on the portion of product we had not taken delivery on so we really showed a taxable income.



*Let the resurrection joy
lift us from loneliness
and weakness and
despair to strength and
beauty and happiness.
~Floyd W. Tomkins*

We have some excellent bargains on Purina Breeder Performance 20% cubes and CTI 40-12% cooked molasses tubs. We have an excess inventory and would like to reduce it before summer pasture.

For every 10 bags of Breeder Performance 20% cubes purchased you will receive 1 bag free. This discount will apply on bulk cube orders also.

For every 8 CTI 40-12% tubs purchased you will receive 1 200 lb. tub free.

The month of April is an important time to supplement beef cows to get ready for the breeding season and these two products will fit good.



Corn Planting Tips

by Mike Thompson

The calendar now says April, and soon many producers in the area will be out in the fields planting their corn seed in hopes of reaching that desired yield goal in search of making a profit along the way. I just wanted to pass along a brief “refresher” that might help eliminate potential stand losses and help with crop emergence and uniformity.

Hopefully everyone has taken the time to go through their planters and make adjustments, and repair/replace broken and worn out parts. Here is a brief list of things that should be checked before reaching the field:

1. With plate-type planters, match the seed grade with the correct planter plate.
2. Planters with finger pick-ups should be checked for wear on the back plate and brush (use a feeler gauge to check tension on the fingers, and then tighten them correctly).
3. Check for wear on double-disc openers and seed tubes.
4. Make sure the sprocket settings on the planter transmission are correct.

5. Check for worn chains, stiff chain links, and improper tire pressure.
6. Make sure seed drop tubes are clean and clear of any obstructions.
7. Clean seed tube sensors if you have a planter monitor.
8. Make sure coulters and disc openers are aligned properly.
9. With air planters, match the air pressure to the weight of the seed being planted

Now after you have checked over the planter and things are ready to go there, here are a few more things to remember:

Check soil temperatures. They should be at least 55 to 60 degrees F at the 2 inch soil depth for 4 days in a row prior to planting. Soils in a conservation tillage system will be slightly cooler than conventional planting systems. Do not plant in wet soils as the planter coulters and press wheels can easily cause sidewall compaction and reduce early season root growth.

Plant seed at least 1.5 to 2 inches deep. Planting shallower can easily reduce nodal root production and subject them to excess wetting/drying events, herbicide and insect injury and sidewall compaction problems. This condition can lead to “rootless corn” syndrome.

Plant slowly (3 to 5 mph). Planting slowly improves depth control and seed placement. The best corn producers across the country insist that proper seed placement

within the row is a key to successful high yield production. Slower planting improves singulation and individual seed placement and spacing in the row thus reducing intra-row competition. Based on studies from Purdue University, it appears that corn growers could improve grain yield anywhere from 4 to 12 bushels per acre if within-row spacing were improved to the best possible uniformity (depending on how bad the spacing variability was to begin with).

Starter fertilizer. Avoid placing starter fertilizer in direct contact with the seed if possible. If you are placing starter fertilizer with the seed, be sure to use less than 10 lbs per acre of N and K combined. On the other hand, starter fertilizer applied in a band to the side of the seed or dribbled on the soil surface at planting time likely will help early corn growth. Here is a link to South Dakota State University for a spreadsheet to help make sure that you are not applying too much of a salt load to the seed. www.plantsci.sdstate.edu

Weed control. Start clean, stay clean. Preplant or planting-time herbicides should provide adequate control during the critical stand-establishment phase. However, scouting is important here as well to maintain the stand and to protect potential yield. Keep an eye on your fields to make sure that rainfall was adequate to incorporate and activate the herbicide, and that it is performing as expected. Don't wait too long with follow-up treatments if necessary.