



# Two Rivers

## Cooperative

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### MISSION STATEMENT

“Two Rivers Cooperative Is Committed To Building Profitable Business Relationships Based On Integrity And Quality”

Two Rivers Cooperative

Pella, Iowa 50219

April, 2008



## Crop Talk

By  
Robby  
Wilson

I'll lay my cards on the table right from the start of this month's article, *We Need Your Help*, and we need it more this year than ever.

You know the situation as well as I do, as well as anyone else does.

There's a huge list of things that we will need to get done to get this year's corn and soybean crops planted.

There are only so many days for that work to be done if the crops are going to be planted on time, or at least close enough to the ideal planting date so there is no significant yield shrink.

And there is pretty much a specific order in which each stage of the planting season progresses from one step to the next so that both corn and soybeans are planted right.

It's obvious therefore, or at least it should be, that for you and us to make the best progress each and every day, we will need to communicate efficiently and effectively with each other.

It will be good communications between us, and nothing else, that makes it possible for us to both be on the same page to start the day, to stay on the same page as the day progresses, and to be looking ahead, planning ahead and making the most timely preparations for the next day and/or the next stage of the process.

Good communications is the key to effectively and efficiently coordinating the manpower and machines that are providing you with custom application

services so they can handle your needs in the most timely manner.

There are a lot of logistics involved that depend on good communications to maximize speed, efficiency and the timeliness of the work that will be done in your fields.

They include mixing the products that will be applied, often the night before, as well as loading the custom machines and/or tenders with products to be applied so we can be there at first light, before the wind kicks up.

They also include coordinating the spraying or spreading schedule so the men and machines spend the maximum amount of time in the fields rather than on the roads traveling back and forth from one area to the next and back again.

Good communications are equally

## Condo Storage Space For Sale

By Tracy Gathman

*I am sure that after reading the words above there may be some who are thinking: "Come on, Tracy, I haven't even been able to start planting this year's crop yet and you're talking about where I am going to store it?"*

*Yes, I'm doing exactly that, since I believe it is now more important than ever before for you to be thinking ahead, planning in advance, and choosing the options and alternatives that you will use to handle the crop you will produce.*

*Storing a portion of the crop for sale at a later date has always been one of those alternatives, and with the condo storage option that we created at Two Rivers this past year, our customers now have an additional alternative to building storage on the farm, and the many additional costs associated with that choice, or paying for commercial storage, and the various other costs associated with that choice.*

*Owning space in condo storage is a solid investment that provides you space and flexibility in handling the larger volumes of grain now being produced on the farm, one which does so without requiring you to sacrifice additional ground on your farm to erect bins, and one which eliminates the time, labor and expense of loading, unloading, maintaining grain quality, running fans, bin upkeep and all the rest.*

*We had a very good response to our initial offering of space in the condo storage program last spring and summer, and the Board has now opened up a new offer that will be available from now until August 15, 2008.*

*Space can be purchased in the condo storage in 5,000 bushel minimum units at a cost of only \$1.75 per bushel. The space can be used for corn or soybeans, and bushels can be delivered to any Two Rivers location and designated towards the condo space owned by the individual at any time.*

*Please contact me if you have any questions or if you want to know more about the benefits, details and advantages of owning space in condo storage.*

critical if you're coming in to pick up products to apply yourself, since similar mixing and loading preparations need to be done.

Our people are going to be stretched even further this season, which means more time will be spent in the country and in the fields, therefore it will be imperative that we have **At Least 24 Hours Advance Notice** on all chemical shuttles that you will be picking up.

While failing to provide 24 hours advance notice about the shuttles is perhaps the biggest single source of contention during the course of a busy spring season, it's certainly not the only area where a call in advance can

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## Fuel Facts

By  
Scott  
Bensink

The start for this spring's diesel fuel contract period is April 1st, which is about a week away from the time I am writing this month's article.

Unfortunately, at the time of this writing we haven't been able to get out to get a head start on the delivery of the gallons that customers have contracted for.

The weather has been totally uncooperative, and road conditions as well as those in most farm drives and on the access routes to fuel storage remain a soggy, muddy mess.

As I am sure you can both understand and appreciate, as soft, muddy and unpredictable as the roads are at this time, it can become downright treacherous with the heavy loads we're hauling into the country.

Not only do we want to avoid getting stuck, tearing up and rutting your driveway and the area around the fuel storage facilities on your farms, we're also wanting to cooperate with the counties to keep road damage to a minimum.

Obviously, we're going to need some sunshine, warmer temperatures and a period of dry weather so these country roads dry out and become driveable, and of course when the conditions do improve it's going to be a very hectic time trying to get as much fuel out as quickly as we can.

Pretty much the entire state finds itself with similar challenges, so I anticipate we could be looking at some significant logistic issues developing if everything breaks open at the same time across a large section of Iowa.

I'll ask for everyone's patience and cooperation in the weeks ahead, and hopefully once the initial push to get fuel out is over, country road conditions will be fit and work will be progressing sufficiently to help ease the pressures.

If you have additional fuel needs to be covered to complete your planting chores beyond the gallons you have already pre-paid and/or contracted with us, my suggestion is to be watching the market very closely for opportunities to layer in additional gallons.

Prices remained strong for most of March as fund investors have been taking advantage of the continued weakness of the dollar to buy into the energy market.

However, in the past few days we've seen prices ease back gradually, and while I don't look for any long term erosion in prices, these are the kind of short term opportunities that give you the chance to pick off lower prices when the market is in a dip.

We have been able to keep up with the LP deliveries and, as of today, I think we're starting to approach the end of delivery on the remainder of this year's contracted LP gallons.

No doubt about it, this has definitely been a year in which the contracting decision on LP was a very good one, and since we'll more than likely come out with our new LP Contracts for the 08/09 season sometime in June, it's not too soon to start thinking about your needs.

I am sure everyone will be extremely busy in the weeks ahead as the spring season shifts into high gear, and I promise you we will be doing our best to keep your farm well supplied with your needs until the crop is all in and you're ready to ease back again.

Please help us maximize efficiency and be as timely and effective as possible by checking on-farm inventories frequently and by calling to give us at least a 24 hour advance notice of when you need the fuel delivery arrive.

## CROP TALK

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make a huge difference in how smoothly things progress.

Therefore, I'd simply suggest that if there is anything at all you're going to be needing to stop in to pick up from any of our locations, just pick up the phone and call in advance to let us know what you need.

Sometimes we have certain supplies at one location but another one is out. Sometimes we need to order products from a supplier.

The point is, by taking a moment to

let us know what you need and when and where you want to pick it up, we can have it ready when you stop, or let you know when it will be ready.

You also need to keep in close and constant communications on where you are with your planting chores, what your plans are for the day, the next day, the rest of the week, so we can have a firmer grip on planning and scheduling services.

Tell us when you intend to start planting a particular field, tell us when you actually start planting, and by all means tell us when you're done planting so we can keep track of time.

And *Most Definitely Tell Us* if you change anything or if there are any changes or modifications in plans, products, programs from what we have originally talked about.

I don't care how small or insignificant any change may be, *We Need To Know About It!*

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that this is going to be a very busy, often hectic spring season for everyone, therefore I can assure you that good communications will play an even bigger, more important role for everyone each and every day.

We won't have time to re-do a lot of the things that need to be done this season, so we will all definitely need to be absolutely certain that each and every procedure in the process is done right the first time.

The few minutes it takes to call in advance, to plan ahead, to double check and verify that all of the details are correct, all of the bases are covered, and that we are both on the same page with each and every thing that is to be done will save you and us precious hours and days.

Two Rivers and all of its people will do everything we possibly can do to serve and assist with your needs, and will do so in the most timely, effective and efficient manner possible.

But as I said at the beginning, we are just one piece of the puzzle that will determine how this spring progresses, and *We Need Your Help* to make it progress well.

## FOR SALE - BY SEALED BID

Former Monroe Office/Warehouse Facility & Scale

To Be Removed By Purchaser By September 15, 2008

Sealed Bids Will Be Accepted Thru May 23, 2008

Contact Nick At Monroe To Inspect This Facility

*The Board of Directors of Two Rivers Cooperative reserves the right to reject any/all bids deemed unacceptable.*

## Seed & Stuff

By  
Jay  
Van Woerkom



As of this writing with a few days left in March, we're working on delivery of seed corn to customers, plus trying to firm up and finalize plans/schedules for custom seed treating services.

Some of this year's winter corn production is still making its way north from production fields in the southern hemisphere, and we need to have delivery arrangements made in advance so we can get this seed out to you as it comes in.

We're also trying to double check with our customers to verify all FSA Field Maps have been updated for this spring's crop plans, programs and products, and of course making sure that everyone has all of their soybean seed needs covered, since there is a definite shortage of soybean seed available this season.

Industry-wide, the soybean seed situation is so tight, that in-season availability will be very questionable, if indeed there is any available at all.

That makes the protection provided by seed treatment even more of a valuable and viable consideration, since there will be limited quantities to turn to if you are faced with replanting soybean stands for any reason.

Soybean seed supplies are so tight, in fact, that the major seed suppliers have all enacted *Zero Return or Extremely Strict Return Policies*, so I once again encourage everyone to take time now to be sure they have all of their soybean seed products and programs finalized.

Speaking of returns, if you have seed, chemicals or other inputs that you're not going to use that you want to return for credit, we need those products returned to us *Right Away*.

I mentioned field maps earlier, and I want to re-emphasize the importance of you taking time to verify there is the right seed to herbicide match *BEFORE* fields are scheduled for spraying this season.

*Keep Good Records*, know what seed technology is planted in every field, and in adjacent fields if possible, and *Document That Information* so we can help avoid a potential disaster.

With the cost of inputs this season, and the value of the crop from the markets, the consequences of spraying the wrong herbicide is just too expensive to risk.



## Feed For Thought

By  
Jason Smit

With the departure of Ashley Paddock as Beef Specialist, Two Rivers Management and the Feed Staff decided the time had come for us to take a closer look at our overall customer's needs and our staffing criteria so we could put together the best match for the future.

After discussing our alternatives, as well as reviewing our past experiences, we feel we have made the best decision for Two Rivers and all of our customers by staying within the Two Rivers Co-op Employee Team and offering the responsibilities of serving our beef producers and operations to Joe Toillion.

As I am sure many of you already know, over the past several years Joe has been doing an outstanding job of providing service to area pork producers and swine operations.

During that time, Joe has been working at Two Rivers in a shared time arrangement with the Heart of Iowa Cooperative on a schedule that alternated him into our area three days per week every other week, and two days on the weeks in between them.

Joe has had an extensive background in livestock production that

has also included customer service and sales to beef operations.

During his 24 years of service to cooperatives and the livestock producers they serve, Joe has earned a solid reputation for providing quality, individual service to each customer and operation he works with.

I am therefore pleased to ask you to welcome Joe to your operations as he calls on you to provide the full range of beef products, programs and services we handle.

Joe will now be working out of the Two Rivers location in Pella three days per week each and every week, and will continue to be available to respond to any questions or discuss any needs with pork and beef producers during regular weekday business hours at his cellular phone, which is 515-290-7260.

Moving on to business items now, although Mother Nature has certainly been dragging her feet on giving us some decent spring weather, nothing has slowed the calving season, and that means down the road not that many more months from now it will be creep feeding time.

At this time Joe and I are working out the final details for Two Rivers' *Calf Creep Feed Promotion*, which has been very popular with our customers over the years.

As always, you will have an excellent opportunity to lock in the supply of your creep feed needs at a significant savings.

We will also, as always, have flexible payment options available for you to choose from so you're able to take full advantage of this offer.

We hope to have everything hammered out by mid-April, so be sure to give us a call if we haven't contacted you to discuss the details of this year's Calf Creep program.

## Check & Double Check Before You Spread/Spray

By Robby Wilson

*Once again I want to include a few brief but very important reminders to our customers about the importance of making sure all of the settings are correct **BEFORE** proceeding with any spreading or spraying using equipment obtained from the Two Rivers Cooperative.*

*Our employees always try to have equipment properly set to serve the needs of the customer prior to the equipment being picked up, however it is, as always, **The Customer's Responsibility** to verify the equipment being taken out has been set to the desired specifications and rates to handle the order that has been placed.*

*Settings can be jugged out of the original and intended setting during transport and during the course of the application, so I recommend that not only do you check all settings and adjustments **Prior To Application**, you also stop and **Check Periodically During Application** at the end rows as you work through the field.*

*When double spreading, check the cart and the settings after the first pass, then adjust accordingly for the second pass if the first pass was heavy or light.*



**As I See It**  
By Tracy Gathman  
General Manager

I am sure you have all heard the expression “*Patience Is A Virtue*” spoken at some point in your lifetime. I know I often heard it as I was growing up, and have used it with my children at times as well.

As we head into what I sincerely believe could be one of the most challenging spring seasons that has been experienced by our area farmers, the cooperative and the employees of Two Rivers in the 10 years since I came to this area, I can assure you that in the weeks to come the “*Patience*” that is demonstrated by each and every one of you will not only be a “*Virtue*” it will be a “*Downright Blessing*”!

There’s no escaping the harsh reality that not a wheel has turned in the fields since the middle of December and, in a lot of cases, things came to a screeching halt on many farms and in many fields right after Thanksgiving, when we were hit with the first of what turned out to be five consecutive weekends of snow or ice, or both.

There is less than a week left in March as I write these words, and with the temperatures staying on the cool side, the ground still soft, cold and unworkable, and rain in the forecast, it’s going to be a minor miracle if any wheels turn before April.

So obviously, there’s no secret or mystery at what lies ahead, as I am sure everyone knows full well that we definitely will have a massive amount of work lined up to challenge us as the spring season unfolds.

Accompanying the need for *You To Be Patient* is the need to have Your Complete Understanding that our employees will be *Doing Everything They Possibly Can* to provide each and every customer with the most timely, efficient and effective service every hour of every day that work can be done.

They will work hard. They will work long hours. They will do their very best for you, for your friends and neighbors and for all of the customers they will be

serving, and you can fully expect to receive their best effort and service.

But to expect more is unrealistic, and to demand more is unreasonable.

There is no such thing as 110%, 120% or anything beyond the full 100% that each man is capable of giving, despite all the sports cliches one hears at this time of the year that suggest there is another level.

When you need dry fertilizer that needs to be spread, you must communicate your needs and make the appropriate plans with the Two Rivers Team, and do so *In Advance*.

When you need liquid nitrogen and chemicals to be sprayed, you must communicate your needs and make the appropriate plans with the Two Rivers Team, and do so *In Advance*.

Advance planning and scheduling, good communications between you and the cooperative staff, and solid teamwork with one another will be critical, will pay huge dividends each day, and will make it possible for everyone to get as much done as smoothly, efficiently and in the most timely manner.

Anything less will invite confusion, frustration, mistakes, problems and delays for all, and we need to do everything possible to avoid those.

You have good equipment assets ready to go to work in your fields, and they can cover a lot of acres each day when proper planning and scheduling accompany good communications provided by the customers to help us maximize effectiveness and timeliness.

You also can count on our outstanding people who are dedicated, experienced and committed to providing you with the best possible service each day, and these are the best possible assets

to have in your corner.

It will be a challenging spring, I have no illusions of it being otherwise. But it’s not like this is our first experience with hard work, long hours, busy schedules and challenging times.

So let’s keep things in the proper perspective, act like we’ve been here before, because at one time or another we all have, and most of all let’s work together as a team, as friends, neighbors and as a Cooperative Family so we can make the most of each day and, at days end, feel good about all we have done.

**SOMETHING NEW:** Over the next several months you will be hearing more about a *New Project* that your Two Rivers is pleased to be a part of in conjunction with Pella Implement that will bring a completely new GPS navigational system to your farms and fields, one that has the capability to provide precision accuracy down to under a 1-inch measurement.

This is totally amazing technology that makes possible a degree of accuracy I feel will set the stage for you to bring the ultimate degree of precision to crop production for the future.

We anticipate this new system will be available in the late summer so that it can be utilized with your fall tillage and other field operation plans and programs, including the application of crop nutrients.

All of the Two Rivers Agronomists have details on the equipment and system to discuss with you, and they will be happy to visit with you about the benefits and advantages this new GPS system possesses, as well as to answer any questions you might have about its various applications, equipment adaptations, etc.



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