



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, 2009



Crop Talk

By
**Robby
Wilson**

Right now, in early April before the full focus shifts to corn planting, you have a absolutely great opportunity to get the maximum value and benefits of your grass pastures by applying fertilizer to them.

Additionally, if you aren't battling any significant weed problems in your grass pastures, now would be the time to inter-seed them with a legume.

One of the most popular choices for this is a Medium Red Clover, however in recent years there have also been a number of Duration Clovers that have been gaining in popularity, since these can last for 3 to 4 years.

The best part is that seeding a pasture with a legume is an economical proposition, costing you only about \$10.00 per acre.

Back to the fertilizer issue for a moment.

With the costs of P & K what they are these days, you really need to use soil test information to base decisions on rates for a grass pasture application, then it becomes a matter of balancing the cost, the need and the return.

You should also look at the pH of the pasture soil test every 4 to 5 years to see if an application of lime will be needed, since lime can really pay off for pastures in much the same way it does for your cash crops.

Staying on top of noxious weeds in your pasture is another key to getting



The New Case IH4420 Sprayer Has Arrived

As mentioned in the March newsletter, the most recent addition to the custom application assets serving the needs of Two Rivers' customers this season is this new Case IH sprayer equipped with 90 foot booms to help us cover more acres with each pass through your fields.

the most out of them, and there are a number of quality products to turn to that will give you outstanding results on the toughest weed problems.

Products like Grazon, Forefront and Milestone will all work well on Canada Thistle, Musk Thistle and Multiflora Rose.

The best time to spray these extremely tough weeds is in the spring when they are in their "Rosette" stage, which can be compared to stage you see on the common dandelion as it first starts putting out its main leaves.

I know there are also quite a few of our customers who have alfalfa stands, and here again, spring is an ideal time to give them a little T.L.C. that will really pay off in the long run.

For example, alfalfa stands have been hit hard the past couple of years by ice and packed snow cover, so there's been even more winter kill to deal with, especially this year, since a lot of fields had the last cut taken off later.

If it's a first year stand of alfalfa, we can re-seed it to address a thin stand,

and if you have an older stand that's been excessively thinned you could seed some red clover into it.

You also need to look at fertility levels for alfalfa carefully, since there is a significant nutrient removal rate that must be replaced to maintain stand productivity, quality and overall health so that it can endure harsh weather extremes.

For example, a 5 ton per acre alfalfa crop pulls 60 units of phosphate and 250 units of potash out of the soils, so those are the maintenance levels you're working with.

We spend a lot of time talking about corn and soybean acres, and rightfully so, but if you have grass pastures and alfalfa stands, we also need to do what is necessary to take care of them so they can fulfill their role as a productive part of your farming operation.

These are just some of the basics, and any of the Two Rivers Agronomists will be more than happy to assist you with these issues, answer

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Fuel Facts

By
Scott
Bensink

For those of you who have contracted spring diesel fuel, please be aware that as of April 1st the gallons you receive from the **Two Rivers Delivery Team** will be coming from your contracted gallons.

We had some great weather in March, and I'm sure many of you may have been able to take advantage of it by getting a head start on at least some of the work on your spring schedule.

I'm putting this article together heading into the final weekend of March, and from the weather forecasts I've been hearing it would appear the month of March, which more or less came in like a lamb, will be going out a bit of a lion, as colder temperatures and perhaps even snow are possible.

If we do get a bunch more moisture, these country roads and, I imagine, most of your farm drives and the areas around your fuel storage, will be a sloppy, muddy mess at times.

Therefore, as you look ahead into April and see the need to order a fuel delivery, please try to plan in advance and call to give us some lead time notice so we can do our best to get the fuel into the country with the least wear and tear on the roads, your driveway, and on the equipment.

Our large delivery trucks carry more gallons so we can bring the maximum volume of fuel out on every trip, thus maximizing timeliness and efficiency.

But since the loads are also much heavier, it helps if we can plan and route deliveries ahead of time to help minimize damage to the roads wherever and whenever possible.

Obviously, we'll need everyone to continue to place orders in advance as the spring season kicks into high gear, since this will help us keep fuel flowing to everyone's farm in the most timely manner throughout the season.

SPRING KEEP FULL: As we've done in previous busy spring seasons (and fall as well) we can add your name to our **Keep Full List** so that whenever one of the drivers is in your area, he can stop by to top off your tank so you have one less thing to keep track of this spring.

If you're interested in this convenient service, just give us a call.

FALL CONTRACTING: In the past couple of weeks we have seen fuel prices moving higher, and I therefore want to remind everyone that Two Rivers does have a **Fall Diesel Contracting** price established.

Just as you check the futures for the price of corn and soybeans for the new crop you'll be planting this spring to see if there are any attractive selling opportunities, I'd suggest you also periodically check the contract price for fall diesel to see if there are opportunities to layer in some gallons.

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your questions, and to work with you to make the most of your pasture and/or alfalfa acres.

SEED CORN TREATMENTS: Since it looks like cool, damp soils may be what we're planting corn into this spring, I want to have you give some thought to protection for your seed corn and the corn plant seedlings.

Agrox Premier is a treatment that can be included at a low rate for a very economical cost of \$2.00 to \$3.00 per bag, and since it also has a fungicide as well as an insecticide in it, this product can definitely provide a solid form of protection for your corn crop when it is most vulnerable to attack.

SOYBEAN SEED TREATMENTS: I am sure you have all read articles in the soybean trade magazines and/or in publications from various universities about the value of the protection you get for your soybean crop when you treat the seed prior to planting.

Marlin Rice, Palle Pedersen and all of the other I.S.U. gurus have been quoting research and results from

countless trials that show how much extra yield can be harvested if treated seed is planted and the spring conditions turn nasty.

There have been many years that the return on treating soybean seed has been up to **7 Times The Investment**.

I guess the best way to look at the protection treated seed gives your crop is that it's a lot like health insurance, it may not pay big savings each and every year, but when you really need it, you are definitely glad you had it, and this year is shaping up to be a year when treating bean seed is a solid choice.

Cool, wet soils are just one part of the equation.

The calendar is another, since leaving a stand unprotected and having diseases or insects rip into it will really hurt because there probably won't be sufficient time to re-plant a severely damaged stand, plus the costs of re-planting make it even more important to protect it right from the start.

One other thing to consider is that in addition to the protection from various fungal diseases you get from treating soybean seed, there is also an insecticide in the treatment that kills the insects that feed on seed and seedlings, and therefore which spread various viral disease like Soybean Mosaic from plant to plant.

TAKE CARE: Finally this month just a very quick but important reminder to everyone to **Be Careful & Be Safe** in all their work this spring.

We don't want any customer or any member of a customer's family injured in any farm accidents, and we don't want any of our employees hurt either, so let's everyone be careful, cautious and safe.

Check & Double Check Before You Spread/Spray

By Robby Wilson

*As I have normally done prior to the start of each spring season, this month I again 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 equipment you've 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 jogged 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 a field, take a moment to 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.

Seed & Stuff

By
Jay
Van Woerkom



With the month of April arriving in just a few days from the time I write this, we're focusing on getting the remainder of the seed our customers have ordered for this season delivered to the farm, or firming up arrangements for customers to pick up their order if that is their preference.

I am hoping by the time this issue of the newsletter arrives in your mail box that we'll have all the seed out, since there are obviously a lot of other things that we'll need to concentrate on handling as spring arrives in full force.

The only seed still not accounted for completely is from the seed manufacturer's winter production fields, and we'll be making arrangements to deliver these to you as your orders arrive.

I know it may sound ludicrous for me to mention **Seed Returns** at this early stage of the game, before all the seed is even out, in fact.

However, please understand the seed suppliers all have tightened their **Seed Return Policies** and therefore we need to work together on any return issues so we can handle these situations smoothly, in the most timely manner, and hopefully to everyone's complete satisfaction.

Also keep in mind that in some cases if you find you have some extra bags of seed corn you don't plant, we may have another customer needing some or all of those bags to finish up on his corn.

Whatever the situation, the message I want to get out to everyone is that it's a tremendous help to all, and also a potentially significant savings to all, when any and all seed returns are handled just as quickly as possible.

IN SEASON SEED: As in the past, Two Rivers will have a good selection of seed corn and soybean seed to fill in any in-season gaps that any of you may encounter.

So if you need more seed to fill out any fields, get in touch with us and we should be able to line you up with the right hybrid/variety, as well as the maturity, genetics and/or family that's the best match to what you've planted.

SEED TREATMENT: Obviously another

major task we'll be addressing in the weeks ahead is the soybean seed treatment services Two Rivers offers.

With the prospects of cool and wet planting conditions getting stronger based on the weather conditions at the time of this writing, I feel seed treatment needs to be given a very close look as you make your final spring plans and decisions.

KEEPING RECORDS: It goes without saying that this spring will be extremely busy and often hectic, so the value and importance of **Keeping Good Written Records** of what you plant and where you plant it is magnified.

You need to take every possible precaution to be sure you know where the Roundup Ready, Liberty Link and any conventional hybrids or varieties are planted so when it comes time to spray those fields we're killing only the weeds, not the crop.



Feed For Thought

By
Jason Smit

CREEP FEED BOOKING: Since everyone will soon be getting very busy with spring work, Joe and I are going to concentrate on getting out to talk to our beef producers during the early part of April about our **Calf Creep Booking program**.

Unfortunately, this is an exceptionally busy time for all Two Rivers customers, so it's not always possible to find everyone we want and need to talk to at home when we stop by.

Therefore, as time goes on and things start to look like they are going to break wide open in the fields, if you haven't talked to one of us, please take a couple of minutes to pick up the phone to give one of us a call so we can fill you in on all

the details.

One difference we do want everyone to keep in mind about this year's **Calf Creep Booking** is that we no longer are manufacturing these products locally.

Instead, we now get all of the creep feed products from the Land O' Lakes Central Plant, which is located in eastern Iowa.

This means we'll need to work even more closely together on planning everyone's creep feed needs so we can be as accurate as possible in calculating total tonnage ordered.

We have made some changes at our mill to enable us to handle a large inventory of creep feeds to serve our producers, and I feel that by ordering in advance from the Central Plant that we'll be able to provide you with a more consistently higher quality creep feed.

As with any feed we're obtaining from the Land O' Lakes Central Plant, it is a tremendous help to us to have **48 Hours Advance Ordering** from our customers, since their manufacturing and delivery schedules are not as flexible.

The **Creep Feeding Booking** program we offer at Two Rivers gives you a tremendous opportunity to lock in Substantial Savings on the creep feed products that have made our entire program such a solid option for cow/calf producers, so be sure you take a little time in the next few weeks to fully investigate all the benefits and savings.

INGREDIENT PRICING: There really haven't been all that many things happening with ingredient prices over the past month, therefore the swine diets we're recommending and their formulations have remained pretty much the same.

Fat would be the exception, as its price has been on the downward trend lately, and if Two Rivers is already doing your rations, the maximum levels of fat are being included to reflect fat's lower price.

It's The Law! Aerial Field Maps Required To Spray

By Robby Wilson

The Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship requires us to have an updated copy of the FSA Aerial Field Map available for fields in which Two Rivers is providing custom application services, and to provide that map to the state certified custom applicator who is performing those services in the customer's field.

It is the responsibility of the customer to supply these FSA Aerial Field Maps for all fields in which custom application services are to be performed.

Two Rivers can not assume liability for misapplication of products for any field for which we have not had an Aerial Field Map provided by the customer.



As I See It
By Tracy Gathman
General Manager

As I write this month's article there are six days remaining in the month of March, and undoubtedly by the time you read these words the calendar pages will be turned to April.

Last month I talked about the anticipation, the excitement and the preparations that were all gradually starting to build as we approached the start of a new spring season, and certainly this month things are even more intense.

Having had an opportunity to get some dry fertilizer spread during March, plus the chance to get out around your farm and fields, has renewed everyone's spirits as I suggested it might, and provided you a fresh outlook on things now that spring is on the doorstep.

All I can say is: ***If you're not excited about and looking forward to spring and the start of a brand new crop season, then perhaps you're not giving yourself the full opportunity to enjoy this very special time of the year as much as you should.***

It is your choice, you know, one of many choices you will have before you in the days, weeks and months ahead.

And with all there is riding on the choices you will make, I sincerely hope you pause for a time to consider those choices, the positive results that can come from making the proper choices, and the potential consequences that may accompany making the wrong choice.

Ironically, it all starts as soon as you rise each morning, since before you ever leave the house you can make the choice on whether or not you're going to do your best to make it a good day, a productive day, and an enjoyable day for yourself, your family, the people you come into contact with, the people who you work along side, and the people who will be working for you.

That's because you make the choice to start the day with a smile or a frown.

You decide whether you're going to

**Be Sure To Take Time This Week To
CHECK YOUR GRAIN BINS
So You Can Protect The Quality & Value Of
All Of Your Farm Stored Grain**

be positive or negative. You decide how you are going to talk to others, deal with others.

Are you going to patient and understanding, or are you going to be demanding and short tempered?

You make those choices in the words you say and the way you treat others.

Are your expectations going to be logical, realistic, possible and plausible, or will they be irrational and excessive?

You know the differences between them, and so those choices should also be simple ones to make.

Will you take the time to exercise the necessary care and caution to be safe so that you will not be injured in an accident working with equipment, operating machinery, mixing chemicals, handling pesticides, lifting heavy objects or any of the countless tasks that you'll be engaged in each day?

Or will you be in a big hurry, rushing about in all directions, trying to do more than can be done, or expecting others to, and thus putting yourself, your family and future all at tremendous risk through carelessness and neglect?

You make those choices too, and they can be life preserving ones, life threatening ones, or in some cases, I'm sorry to say, they can be life ending ones.

These are just some of the many, many choices that you will have an opportunity to make each and every day, and as these examples hopefully

illustrate, the choices you make can and will make a huge difference to you, to your farm and family, and to everyone else you encounter.

They will make a huge difference in how this season progresses for you, how it unfolds for others, how the work gets done and how you feel about the day and about yourself when you turn out the lights at night and lay down in bed.

Do you want to feel good about how the day went?

Do you want to feel good about how you treated all of the other people you talked to, worked with, and who worked for you?

Do you want to have any regrets? Are there things you said or did that you wish you could take back or, even better, that you would not have done or said in the first place?

Or are you satisfied that you did the best you could, that others were doing the best they could, and thus have you ended the day pleased that the accomplishments and progress you have made have given you a positive outlook and a solid foundation from which you can begin the next day?

As I said last month and in previous newsletter articles, I am looking forward to this spring season and the opportunities it presents to all of us to move forward with a renewed spirit of optimism and a positive outlook on the future, and that too is the choice each of you have an opportunity to make as spring arrives on your farm.



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