



Two Rivers

Cooperative

Monroe: 259-2232

Otley: 627-5311

Pella: 628-4167

Tracy: 949-6411

www.tworivers.coop

MISSION STATEMENT

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

Two Rivers Cooperative

Pella, Iowa 50219

August, 2009



Crop Talk

By
Robby
Wilson

THANKS: To begin with I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the producers who were able to attend our **Pasture & Forage Management Meeting** in early July, as well as to thank those who were able to attend the **Instinct Meeting** where we discussed liquid manure and nitrogen management.

I felt there was a lot of useful information presented at these meetings, things that I am also sure can help all of you to answer some questions and deal with specific issues you're encountering on your operation.

We sincerely appreciate the interest that is shown and the participation of our customers at these and other meetings, and we will continue to try to bring you the very latest and most useful facts and information to keep you abreast of what's happening in all segments of production.

PREPARE NOW: With work in the fields winding down as August arrives, and the prospects of this year's crop being a big one, I feel now would be an excellent time to start getting your grain storage facilities and equipment in shape to handle your new crop.

The best stored grain management program starts long before a bushel of corn or soybeans ever goes into the bin. In fact, it starts before the combines do.

The objective you should have targeted is to provide a clean, bug free

environment for your grain to be put into as you unload bushels on the farm, and that means you need to put a weed-free barrier around your bins and bin sites that extends at least three feet from the bin walls.

Products like Roundup and 2,4D, along with a soil sterilizing product called Pramitol, will kill weeds and grass and keep the foliage down to eliminate a prime site where grain damaging insects breed and hide.

You also need to spray the inside of bins completely using products like Tempo or Insecto to eliminate insects and insect eggs that are likely concealed in every nook, cranny and crevice of your bins.

It's a good idea to spray grain handling equipment (augurs and so forth), the fans, exhaust system, duct work, sub-floors, even grain wagons, trucks and the combine, since anywhere there is old grain or grain debris there will likely be insects and the eggs they have laid.

I also suggest you consider spraying the outside bin walls at least half way up, plus around the bin where you've killed weeds and into the surrounding vegetation to help get rid of bugs that would infest grain later.

Feel free to get in touch with your Two Rivers Agronomist for products

Mark Your Calendar So You Can Join Us For CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY FAMILY BARBECUE & PICNIC

Tuesday, September 8th At The Pella Location

Serving From 4:00 To 7:00 p.m.

Steaks & Pork Loin Sandwiches

Chips * Snacks * Ice Cream * Refreshments

Bring Your Family To Join In The Friendship-Fellowship-Fun

With All Of The Members Of The Two Rivers Cooperative Family

to use, rates and any other stored grain management suggestions that will help you do the best job of preserving and protecting the value of the crop you have so much invested in to assure you get the maximum return when it crosses the scales.

APHID TIME: August will soon be here, and as has been the case the past couple of years, we need to be prepared to deal with **Soybean Aphids** as it arrives.

I've talked to people in other areas who are telling me they have aphid numbers approaching threshold levels of 250 aphids per plant.

While we haven't seen any that are that high yet, the rapid reproduction rate of these bugs could change that in just a few days.

As you may recall, Soybean Aphids over-winter on buckthorn trees, which are common in brushy areas along Iowa rivers, streams, field drainage areas and so forth.

Female aphids start laying eggs in the spring and there can be as many as 10 to 15 generations born per year, so it's possible for the population of aphids to double every 5 to 7 days.

In other words you can go from around 250 per plant at the start of a

CROP TALK

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Fuel Facts
By
Scott Bensink

By now I'm sure everyone is aware I've re-located to the Monroe location.

Therefore if you have any questions or need to visit with me about fuel/energy pricing, contracting or other issues related to the fuel/energy products and services Two Rivers handles to serve your needs, please feel free to stop in to see me at the Monroe office, or call 641-259-2232.

Now on to business, and the **First Reminder** to LP customers is to be aware the **LP Contracting Deadline is August 31st.**

Hopefully you've already locked in your needs, since prices have been edging higher the past few weeks and it appears the trend will continue.

However, if you still have not contracted your LP for the 2009/10 season as you read this, be sure you don't miss the opportunity to lock in your supply prior to the end of August.

The **Second Reminder** I'll include in this month's article is for all of our diesel fuel customers, since we want you to be aware that we have **Diesel Fuel Contracts** available at this time to give you the opportunity to layer in your needs for the rapidly approaching fall harvest season.

I am sure you've noticed how fuel prices are also edging higher at the pumps in recent weeks, and it appears the upward trend is likely to be here as we move into the peak use season.

The recent gains by the financial markets that have accompanied the gradual recovery of the economy here at home and overseas have, along with the on-going weakness of the dollar, pushed more investment dollars into the fuel/energy markets, driving crude prices higher.

The price of crude has been on a remarkable and unprecedented two year ride, going from \$71.00 per barrel in July of 2007 to \$145.00 per barrel in July of 2008, and then back into the mid \$70.00 per barrel range this past July.

Along the way, crude prices actually fell to around \$35.00 per barrel just last winter, so from July of 2008 to July of 2009 we had a \$110.00 per

barrel shift in the price of crude as the bottom fell out of the market in the winter of 2008/09.

But in the past 7 months since 2009 arrived, we have tacked on \$25.00 per barrel as crude prices rebounded from the lows, and crude has continued to move higher, selling for \$65.00 per barrel at this time.

Moving on now to **Reminder Three**, as in the past **We Will Not Be Filling Dryer Tanks** with LP this summer **Unless The Customer Calls To Request Us To Do So.**

If you feel you're going to need to dry corn at home and therefore want to have a supply of LP on hand, please call any location or get in touch with me at Monroe to ask for your LP driver to fill your dryer tank.

In closing, if you have not already had an opportunity to meet and welcome **Mark Rempe** to the Two Rivers Cooperative, I hope you will do so when the opportunity arises.

Mark joined our LP Team in June and will be providing services to customers in the Otley and Monroe areas.

Over the past 4 years he was with the River Valley Co-op in eastern Iowa handling similar duties, so his background and experience in the LP business will be solid assets in serving you.

Seed & Stuff
By
Jay Van Woerkom



ATTENTION: If you're interested in seeing the latest in seed genetics and crop technology, plus a whole lot more, **Mark Your Calendar** to set aside **Tuesday September 15th** so you can join us for a **tour of the Answer Plot near Grinnell.**

Steve Barnhart, Croplan Land O'Lakes Regional Agronomist will be joining your Two Rivers Agronomists and interested customers for a tour

through this extensive series of corn and soybean plots.

We're still finalizing some of the details, but it looks like we'll be leaving in the mid morning and pooling rides to the plots, and then we'll serve a meal once we return in the afternoon.

Please contact your Two Rivers Agronomist or get in touch with me to reserve your spot on this trip.

SELDOM THE SAME: While it's true many areas are having similar growing conditions as they did a year ago, who knows what 2010 might bring?

That's why it's important to take advantage of the tremendous diversity that today's genetic advances have brought into the seed industry, which give your crops an edge no matter what Mother Nature sends our way.

POLLINATION POINTS: Farmers know pollination occurs when a corn plant's pollen is transferred to the silks.

But many also think corn is mostly self-pollinated, which is incorrect, since as much as 97% of the kernels are actually fertilized by other corn plants.

While the "male" genetic contributor (pollen) comes out regardless of conditions, the female counterpart (silks) can have problems due to insects or adverse weather, with heat and drought stresses the most common causes of incomplete silk emergence.

In fact if silk emergence is significantly delayed due to stress, pollen shed can take place before receptive silks become available, which is why it's always wise to spread planting dates and to plant different hybrids to spread out pollen shed.

Silk balling, which is caused by sharp weather changes (hot days, cool nights) is another cause of corn not pollinating.

While it's impossible to prevent, there are genetic families that are less susceptible than others to silk balling.

Notice Of Holiday Closing
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7th
LABOR DAY
Please Plan All Of Your Supply-Service-Business Needs To Accommodate The Holiday Hours

We Invite You & Your Family To Join Us For
AG IN THE CITY OF PELLA FARM FEST
Thursday, August 20th From 5:00 To 9:00
See Local Dealership Farm Machinery Displays
Plus Antique Tractor Displays
LOADS OF FUN-SURPRISES-PRIZES FOR THE KIDS
Watch Local Media For Additional Details To Be Announced
REGISTER TO WIN VALUABLE DOOR PRIZES



**Livestock
Production**
By
Nick Steinbach

We're seeing a little relief in many feed ingredient prices lately, and along with the recent dip in the values of corn and soybean meal, livestock producers may at last be able to see some light at the end of this long tunnel of challenging times.

Over the past couple of weeks, new crop corn prices have drifted some 40 cents lower, while new crop soybean prices have been hit even harder, dropping by around \$2.00 during this same period.

There's historical precedent for grain values to fade somewhat in the period leading up to fall harvest when the prospects seem likely for a large crop to come in, as appears to be the situation we're looking at to start August.

And while this is not the kind of trend grain producers welcome, it has traditionally been a period of opportunity for livestock producers to get in on lower feed costs by buying/booking future needs while new crop markets are under pressure.

With that in mind, you may want to start paying closer attention to both current and new crop markets as we approach fall, and if you see an opportunity to lock in a more economical feed cost, give it strong consideration.

Obviously, Joe and I welcome the opportunity to **"Crunch Numbers"** with you on any projections so you can make sound decisions, so be sure to get in touch if we can be of any assistance.

I hope all of you have had the chance to show your support of the young men and women in our local 4-H and F.F.A. groups as they were showing projects at the various county fairs that have been under way over the summer.

There is a lot of time, hard work, dedication and commitment put in by these young adults, and the valuable learning experiences they have had along with the lasting memories of the fun and friendship they have shared make the county fairs a lifelong highlight they will be able to treasure long after the ribbon colors have faded.



**Hybrid
Vigor**
By
Joe Toillion
Swine & Beef
Specialist

As all of you with pasture cattle know, once we get this deep into the summer season the pastures start to fade steadily, even when we have been getting ample moisture, as we have been up to the end of July.

Steady grazing along with the rapid early season growth has used a lot of the nutrients that were in the soils, and as we get these hotter temperatures and rainfall slacks off in the latter stages of summer, the quantity and quality of pastures diminishes.

It's at times like this that feeding liquid QLF supplement through the lick tanks can really pay off for cows and the calves.

Not only is QLF a very economical product to feed, it's also extremely flexible and nothing can beat it for convenience.

As I have mentioned in the past, it's also a great choice to use for a liquid creep feed, since you can let the cows and calves both have access to QLF until you're ready to wean the calves, then you just corral off the lick tank with the calves and they have it as a creep supplement.

This puts pounds on the calves without the fleshiness that you normally associate with grain-based creep feeds.

Another feature that makes feeding QLF handy is that we're able to supply it using converted nurse tanks, which are significantly lighter

weight and a whole lot more maneuverable than the trucks we use for feed delivery these days, and that's a real plus as we're delivering product to your pastures.

We also have roughage-based creep feeds available for those of you who prefer to go that direction, so be sure to let us help you choose the right creep feed and feeding program as you get closer to weaning your calves.

CROP TALK

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week to 500 per plant at the end, to 1,000 after another week, and 2,000 per plant at the end of 2 weeks, so it's obvious that scouting and re-scouting fields is the key to avoid having a significant yield damaging population suddenly explode in a field.

Soybean aphids suck the moisture and nutrients out of plant leaves and, as everyone who has walked through an infested field knows, they also secrete a black sticky substance referred to graciously as "honey dew".

These secretions can significantly impact photosynthesis to reduce pod and seed count, thus retarding plant growth and taking a bite out of yields. Aphids also transmit several viral diseases that will carve up yield potential.

Get Out To Scout, and then re-scout fields every week or so, and if you want one of the Two Rivers Team to stop out to assist in scouting, help evaluate thresholds, recommend solutions, products and rates if treatments are necessary, just call.

**Don't Miss Your Chance To See The
TWO RIVERS CREW
DEFENDS THEIR TITLE
At The Pella Chamber's
WATER BALL FIGHTS
Thursday, August 13th**

Mark Your Calendar & Plan Accordingly
TWO RIVERS COOPERATIVE
FISCAL YEAR ENDS AUGUST 31, 2009

The end of another fiscal year of operations is rapidly approaching and we take this opportunity to extend our thanks and appreciation to all of our members for their continued support and business over what has been a very eventful and exciting year of business for your cooperative.

As with all fiscal year ends, a complete inventory of all of the cooperative's grain, feed, agronomy, petroleum and other merchandise will need to be conducted by members of the Board, Staff and representatives from our auditors, and since this requires the full and undivided attention of all individuals who are taking the inventory, it will be necessary to close for the period of time during which inventory is being conducted at each location.

These times will be posted location-by-location as the time for inventory to be conducted is established.



As I See It
By Tracy Gathman
General Manager



P.O. Box 47
Pella, Iowa 50219

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In last month's newsletter article I discussed why your Two Rivers Board and Management believe the time has now arrived to consolidate the **"Links"** that have been developing, and strengthening, between what have historically been treated as separate market and marketplace entities that impact the decisions you make for your farming operation's plans and programs, along with the goals and objectives you establish to assure and enhance profitability.

In that article I noted how, in recent years, Two Rivers has added, enhanced and expanded some of the basic services we are able to bring to the table to serve and assist you in this process, namely the **CFA Producer Input Financing Program** and our **Crop Insurance Services**.

And now, your Board of Director's has authorized Two Rivers to enter into a new venture which is, as I stated last month, positions us to take the next logical and obvious step in this process.

In doing so, we firmly believe this new venture will enable the Two Rivers Cooperative to fulfill and accomplish the fundamental objective which the cooperative system and local cooperatives were originally intended to fulfill when the cooperative form of business was founded.

Perhaps some of you may recall that in my Manager's Message delivered at an Annual Meeting several years ago, I quoted Nelson Gardner's statement relative to the fundamental business role that a cooperative business is to fill:

"Cooperative's have to remember what they were started for. The purpose of a farmer cooperative is to enhance member's income, and they should keep that at the top of their list of priorities."

It has been that broad and yet fundamental statement which has served as a focal point for many of the discussions which have been held when the

Board of Directors and the Management Staff of Two Rivers have convened at **Strategic Planning Sessions** held to lay the foundation that establishes both short and long term operational objectives for your cooperative.

As we have evaluated our on-going programs and the operations of Two Rivers to determine how we are fulfilling that role each year, the ultimate question that we continue to ask is: **"How Can We Do It Better?"**

Launching this new venture is, we believe, the starting point from which the answer to that question will now be provided.

At the outset, and for lack of a better term to define this venture, we are referring to it as the **Two Rivers Cooperative Financial Services Project**, the objective of which is clearly specified in the quotation above - **To Enhance Member Profitability**.

To accomplish this objective we will be utilizing some of the services we are currently offering, namely producer input financing through CFA, plus crop insurance, not only to provide the customer with protection from natural perils, but also to establish solid revenue protection from the extreme risks of volatile markets, and adding to those the programs and services from our new **Financial Services Project**.

With this additional piece of the puzzle now supplied by our new **Financial Services Project**, you will be in a much stronger position to better manage the extreme financial risks you now face in the very volatile crop input markets and marketplaces, and I am sure the events of the past 18 months or so in the fertilizer market are sufficient proof of just how important and valuable that can be.

Furthermore, with the extreme volatility of our grain markets also clearly illustrated by the dramatic roller coaster ride that corn and soybean prices have been experiencing the past 18 months or so, the crop insurance services Two Rivers offers will be further enhanced.

At the very heart of this project will be a one-to-one business relationship with the **Financial Services Representative** to determine specific and actual costs of production for the customer by both crop and farming operation.

I have always maintained that unless the producer knows the exact cost of production for corn and soybeans for his/her farming operation for a crop that is in the ...

... **Bin today**, he/she can and will never know what price those bushels must be sold at to assure profitability.

... **Fields approaching harvest**, he/she can and will never know what price those bushels will need to be sold at to assure profitability.

... **Planning stages for next spring**, he/she can and will never be able to make informed decisions on purchasing inputs needed to raise that crop or to make future sales to cover those costs and assure profitability.

At the time of this writing with just a few days remaining in July, I am in the process of interviewing prospective candidates to fill the position that is being created to offer these new and enhanced services to our customers, and I anticipate being able to introduce that individual plus offer additional information on this exciting new project to all of you in my next article.

We are very excited about this new project, and I welcome your comments and questions as we move forward.