



Two Rivers

Cooperative

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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

June, 2009



Crop Talk

By
Robby
Wilson

There may have been a few more soybean fields that needed to be planted as we headed into the Memorial Day holiday weekend, which is when I put this information together for my article, but there probably weren't all that many.

Mother Nature had given us a very good stretch of favorable weather and field conditions for over a week, at least in terms of getting the beans into the ground.

I just wish she would have been as cooperative with our spraying machines as she was with our planters, since for the biggest share of that week the sun was coming up with the wind already blowing in the 10 to 15 mph range, and it definitely picked up speed over the rest of the day.

Two Rivers Custom Application Crew did a fantastic job spraying the maximum number of acres possible when the winds weren't as fierce, and thanks to them and the good communications and cooperation we had from customers with planning and scheduling orders, we've been able to keep pace.

As the last rows of beans are planted, the focus shifts to the **Number One Priority** that all of you will need to be working on over the course of the next several weeks, and of course that means **Scouting Your Fields**.

The corn is coming up nicely in most fields, though there are scattered

Advance Notice Of Holiday Closing For The

4TH OF JULY

HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Friday - Saturday - Sunday

July 3rd - 4th - 5th

Please Mark Your Calendars And Plan Accordingly

For The 3-Day Holiday Weekend Closing

So We Can Serve All Needs Effectively & Efficiently



reports of some crusting problems, plus there have been a few areas that have been washed out by the rains that fell after the crop went in.

Since it's just the end of May as I write this, these and any other trouble or problem spots can still be patched up nicely, but the key is to identify these areas sooner, not later.

That obviously means you need to get out there to scout the fields closely to see if and where the corn had any emergence problems so if there are areas that you need to fill in, you'll be better able to blend those areas in with the rest of the field.

Also keep in mind that this is the time of the year to be scouting your corn for any signs of clipping by cut-worms.

So far we haven't seen or heard about any significant issues with these bugs in our area, but it's still fairly early in the game, and until corn gets a bit taller and the natural defense to cut-worm kicks in, the stand is always vulnerable to attack.

You also want to be paying close attention to both corn and soybean acres for any possible weed escapes.

We've had some very timely rains and the chemicals that were applied pre-plant and pre-emerge have been doing a fine job up to this point.

However, there is always the possibility that we may have missed a spot in a field as we were spraying it, or that you may have missed one if you

were pulling a sprayer yourself.

If you **Scout The Fields** you'll be able to identify these areas and, with the crop protection technologies we have going for us today, we can get out to clean them up on a timely basis, without injuring the crop, and solve the issue effectively.

I've said this before, but it bears repeating: There is virtually no reason with all the advantages we have going for us these days to have to deal with any significant weed problems late in the season.

Put another way, if there are weed problems out there today, they can be fixed right now, fixed quickly, efficiently and economically. But they can not be fixed at harvest time in the fall.

So once again, please take time to **Scout Your Fields** for these or any other potential problem issues, and if you see anything that you're not pleased with, anything that you're concerned about, or anything you feel needs attention, **Contact Us Now** so we can do something about it.

SEED TREATMENTS: We have had another good season for treating soybean seed, and once again we feel the farmers and the fields will both benefit from this management.

Beyond the obvious benefits of protecting the seed and seedling from diseases, some of the seed treatments

CROP TALK

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Fuel Facts
By
Scott Bensink

The **Budget Billing** letters were mailed out to customers during the week of May 18th.

If you contacted us to express your interest in being enrolled by the May 15th deadline to inform us of your intentions, you should have received one of these letters and your Budget Billing Contract.

If you asked to be enrolled prior to May 15th and you did not receive this information in the mail, please contact Robin in Pella, or call me in Otley.

If you did not apply to be included in this year's Budget Billing program by the May 15th deadline, it will be necessary for you to contract your LP needs to lock in pricing on your fall/winter heating needs for the 2009/10 season.

Our **LP Contracting** program will once again require a 10 cent per gallon down payment to lock in the specified number of gallons and the price contracted at, and as in the past, this down payment is non-refundable.

I would highly recommend that you watch the contracting price for LP very closely, and that you definitely do not miss the opportunity to lock in a firm price for at least a major portion of your anticipated season-long needs.

As I am sure everyone has been noticing, the prices for fuel/energy are once again moving higher, and just this week we had crude oil breaking through to above \$60.00 per barrel.

To put that in perspective, we had dipped to lows in the \$34.00 to \$35.00 barrel range earlier this year, so the market appears to be regaining strength, and with that will come added volatility.

Obviously, the price for diesel fuel is also moving higher, as I am sure everyone has been noticing too, so the Fall Diesel Contracts and the prices we're offering on fall diesel need to be monitored closely as well.

BEWARE SPECIAL DEALS: I know everyone is familiar with the statement: **"If something sounds too good to be true, then it probably is not true"** or words to that effect we've heard our parents use, and that

most of us have also used, as words of warning to refer to special deals or offers.

Based on several calls I've recently received from a few LP customers, it appears time to remember those words once again, as there is apparently an LP supplier making the rounds offering to swap out your existing LP tank and replace it absolutely free with a new one, plus give a one time fill up at a very low price.

That sounds all well and good on the surface. In fact, a free tank and a low-price fill up sounds great.

But is it really?

Before you fall hook, line and sinker for an offer like this, there are a few things I think you need to have ironed out beforehand, such as ...

... **Who owns** the tank?

... **If it's a lease-to-own** tank, then how long does the lease run before you own it?

... **Have you read** the lease contract, including the fine print, so you know all the terms and the penalties you're agreeing to before you sign?

... **What price** will you be paying after that one time low cost fill?

Just remember, until you actually own the tank outright, you're limited to having the tank filled by the supplier who furnished it.

Anyone who has traveled south of the border has quickly found out: **"There's Nothing Free In Mexico"** regardless of how enticing the offers you hear, and I think that's equally true here in the states as well.



Feed For Thought
By
Jason Smit

The cost for fat has started to ease off some in recent weeks, and we will continue to monitor this situation closely in the weeks ahead.

The summer season, with its higher temperatures, is one of the main times when feeding fat in rations can be a major benefit, especially if fat prices are economically attractive.

And speaking of summer, now would definitely be the time to start getting your facilities in shape for the challenges of housing animals during the hot, humid weather of summer.

Checking your watering systems, any cooling systems if you have them, the fans and thermostat controls are just some of the things that need to be added to your **Things To Do List** before summer heat strikes.

Finally, don't forget to keep your fly control products and programs freshened up and good supplies on hand for the remainder of the fly season.

Populations can mushroom very quickly if you allow gaps to occur in your efforts to control flies, so keep the pressure on continuously with effective fly control products working full time.



Hybrid Vigor
By
Joe Toillion
Swine & Beef Specialist

The mineral season is here, so be sure that the cattle you have on pastures are well supplied with the proper mineral products and, of course, that salt is also available.

We highly recommend feeding a mineral with tetracycline during the breeding season, since this helps flush cows, and some of our producers are using our QLF Liquid in lick tanks to supply this product.

Feeding the liquid mineral offers added convenience while at the same time providing the extra shot of nutritional values that will definitely pay off in the long run for your cow herd, and for the calves.

I look forward to seeing you at the Pork Expo.

Thanks To Jason Smit For His Years Of Service

By Tracy Gathman

As I am sure many of you have heard by this time, Jason Smit has accepted an exciting new career opportunity with a top business in the feed and livestock industry located closer to his hometown area in northwest Iowa.

Jason has been with your cooperative for the past 6 years, and over the past five years he has done a fine job of managing the Feed Department.

I know all of you will join with me in thanking Jason for his dedication and the fine job he has done serving Two Rivers and its customers, and I know we all wish him and his family continued success for the future.

Seed & Stuff

By
Jay
Van Woerkom



The post emerge spraying season will be underway soon, therefore now is definitely the time for you to **Double Check** to make sure that you have, and that we have, all Roundup Ready, Liberty Link and conventional corn and soybean fields properly identified so the right chemical products will be sprayed on them.

Let's not take chances on an incorrect match between the seed planted and the chemical that is to be sprayed.

Guessing is not an option, and anything less than being 100% correct could be disastrous.

RETURNS: If you have any seed to be returned, please do so just as soon as possible, since the seed companies have rigid terms regarding returns, and if we're to give you full credit on returned products, we need to have them back to us in a timely manner.

On a related note, please be sure that all seed pallets have been returned and, if you have some that are still on your farm, take a few moments to get them back to us soon as well.

WEED COMPETITION: In the rush to get fields planted early when Mother Nature lets planters into the fields while wind or wet conditions often keep the pre-emerge sprayers out, early emerging, fast growing weeds frequently gain an edge on the crop.

Effective post-emerge treatments enable us to tackle the weeds, but that does not solve the stiff competition those weeds have given the crop for vital moisture and nutrients at the crucial early stages of growth.

The bottom line is that there can be and are significant yield losses taking place right from the start due to this weed competition, with as much as a 10% yield reduction in corn as early as the V2 stage.

If a field is heavily infested with weeds (10 or more per square foot) you definitely need to try to get controls applied before weeds exceed two inches in height to minimize losses.

STAND EVALUATION: Every crop faces various challenges at the early stages of the season when it is especially vulnerable, and this corn crop is

ATTENTION PORK PRODUCERS

See Jason Or Joe For Free Meal Tickets

To The Land O' Lakes/ Purina Feed Booth (Tent #HT 145)

WORLD PORK EXPO LUNCH SERVED 11:00 TO 1:00

Thursday & Friday, June 4th & 5th - Iowa State Fairgrounds

certainly no exception.

Seedling blights are just one of the issues we're hearing talked about, and as you get time to monitor your already emerged or soon to emerge corn crop, take time to check what's happening just below the surface.

The overall health of the kernel, root and mesocotyl are essential for survival, since these feed the plant up to the 6th leaf stage, when the nodular root system becomes more developed.

The time you spend to monitor and evaluate the emergence and general health of your corn will pay off by enabling you to detect potential problem areas early enough to take decisive action if that becomes necessary.

CROP TALK

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customers use also offer protection against the initial wave of Soybean Aphids and the over-wintering genera-

tion of Bean Leaf Beetles.

VOLUNTEER CORN: In closing just a quick word to address the issue of volunteer corn in soybeans, which we need to be on top of fast.

If you planted a Roundup Ready Corn in any field which is going into Roundup Ready soybeans this year you need to ...

... **Talk to your Two Rivers Agronomist** about the product or products to spray post to control it if you're spraying the field.

... **Be Sure you inform us** that the field was Roundup Ready Corn in 08 if we're going to be spraying it post.

Monsanto offers a special program for control of volunteer Roundup Ready Corn in this year's Roundup Ready Soybeans, provided that "**Branded Products**" have been planted to be used to help offset a portion of the cost, and, most importantly, to assure optimum control.

Bringing The "Ultimate In Precision" To Your Fields

By Matt Van Weelden

As Tracy has discussed in his article this month, your Two Rivers Cooperative, working in conjunction with Pella Implement, is now ready to take the next exciting step that will bring the Ultimate In Precision to area farms and fields as we introduce the programs and services of RTK (Real Time Kinetics).

RTK takes the basic principles of the Global Positioning Network to the next highest step to provide greater accuracy.

The GPS equipment now used by many of our area's farmers runs off the Coast Guard's signal (WAAS) that is located in Rock Island, Illinois. The information from this system is beamed to the satellite and back in a process that takes anywhere from 3 to 5 seconds.

Now, that may not sound like much, but since in most cases the machinery using the GPS system are operating at 7 mph, there can be up to a 6-inch variation in the accuracy attained.

RTK will utilize base stations in Pella and Monroe, both of which are currently operational, plus two more in the Oskaloosa area, which will soon be up and running, to cut the relay time for sending and receiving the data to and from the satellite to a maximum of 2 seconds, thus providing a degree of accuracy that is at maximum less than a single inch.

One of the many features that makes RTK so valuable is the "Repeatability Factor", since once the data has been accumulated for a particular field, you will be able to go back year after year using that same data.

It is also a valuable tool for those who are utilizing strip till systems, or who are anticipating using them in the future.

Two Rivers Cooperative has been using RTK to spray this spring, and the system is working exceptionally well, and over the summer months we will be visiting with interested producers to see how it might fit into their plans and needs.

If you have any questions or you are interested in additional information on RTK and how it might fit your needs, please do not hesitate contacting me so we can arrange a time to get together for a visit about this exceptional, exciting and latest advance in technology.



As I See It
By Tracy Gathman
General Manager



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ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY: To begin with this month, I want to call your attention to the separate article that appears on page three of this issue of the newsletter in which Matt Van Weelden discusses the exciting new service Two Rivers has been working on, and which we are now ready to move forward with over the summer.

It was a little over a year ago, in my article that appeared in the April, 2008 newsletter, that we introduced a special new project Two Rivers had entered into with Pella Implement to bring the **Ultimate In Precision Farming Accuracy** to the farms and fields of our customers.

Two months later, in a front page notice in the June newsletter, we announced a special June 12th demonstration of this exciting new technological advance.

Now, after many months of preparation, we are ready to take the next step in this process.

As I stated last year, we feel this technology sets the stage for local farmers to bring the highest possible degree of accuracy to their fields, and thus enhance the tasks of planting the crop and applying crop nutrients and crop protection products to maximize both savings and profitability.

I want to recognize and congratulate Matt for the outstanding job he has done and for the many hours he has put in to spearhead the Two Rivers' portion of this project.

And I encourage anyone who is interested in finding out more to read this article and to be in touch with Matt for additional information.

PROJECT UPDATE: By the time you are reading this newsletter, the excavation phase for the new 414,000 bushel steel storage bin that will be erected at the Pella location over the summer will be at least 75% completed and, with good weather, perhaps we'll be even a bit farther along.

As the excavation crew finishes their work, the concrete crew will be

arriving to pour the foundation for the bin, which we anticipate will be sometime during the week of June 8th.

There's always a lot of interesting activity going on as a facility of this size is being put up, and I will keep you updated on the progress we're making in future newsletter articles.

Additionally, we'll try to keep you up to date on all that's happening on this project by posting photos on the Two Rivers web site of the progress being made as the bin goes up.

IMPROVEMENTS: Speaking of the Two Rivers web site, over the course of the next month or more we will be making some changes, enhancing and redesigning portions of our web site to give it a fresh, new look.

There will be improvements made to existing web site features, plus we'll be adding some new features that we feel will make the web site more informative, more user friendly, and thus more valuable to you and your farming operation for the future.

There is, as those of you who access the Two Rivers web site know, a vast amount of useful information available on and through the web site.

One of the things we've done in this process is to try to make it much more convenient and easy for you to navigate your way through the numerous links that are available to use on the web site to access different segments of news and information.

Obviously, one of the most valuable benefits any web site can offer is the ability to provide its customers with virtually instantaneous news and information that can be used to make vital management and business decisions for their farming operation.

With the immense volatility, uncertainty and unpredictability of many of

today's input markets and marketplaces causing prices to fluctuate rapidly, and in some cases dramatically, one of the new and special features we are looking into making available through the Two Rivers web site will be more **"Secure Access Areas"** to enable us to post specific real-time pricing information for the two most volatile areas of crop inputs, fertilizers and fuels.

If we are able to accomplish this, it will not only give us the ability to provide our customers with valuable information on the trends that are shaping prices and availability in the fuel and fertilizer markets, but also to post Two Rivers' programs and up to date prices for those inputs in much the same way as grain bids are posted.

One of the most popular and widely used features of the Two Rivers web site is the area that customers use to access information on their business transactions with Two Rivers.

Perhaps the most useful and valuable benefits come from being able to have up to date information about and to track any and all of your grain transactions, including the status of the various grain contracts (price later, deferred price, futures contracts, etc.), and of course to monitor the volume of corn and soybeans you may have placed into elevator storage.

So be sure to take a close look at the new as well as the existing features that appear on the Two Rivers web site as we make changes and give the site a fresh look in the weeks ahead.

And of course please feel free to share any comments, ideas or suggestions you may have on how we can continue to enhance and improve the web site to make it an even more valuable information and decision making tool for you and your farming business.