



# 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

March, 2007



## Crop Talk

By  
Robby  
Wilson

Before getting into the major topics I want to cover in this March issue of the newsletter, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the customers who were able to attend our February meeting that focused on corn-on-corn issues, as well as some of the key factors related to profitable soybean production in 2007.

We had one of the best turnouts for any meeting we've held in recent years, and that is very much appreciated, since your support, participation and attendance are the things we evaluate and use to determine the value of holding meetings such as this.

I also want to express my personal thanks, and the thanks of the Agronomy Team and our guest speakers, to all of you who have come up following the meeting to express your views and to tell us you feel the information discussed is and will be valuable for you and your farming operation.

If you were unable to attend, I would like to strongly recommend that you set aside time to get together with one of the Two Rivers Agronomists so we can talk to you about the value and benefits of using fungicide products on corn and soybeans.

There were some very dramatic results revealed at these meetings which show the significant yield advantages that are achieved by addressing plant health issues with the timely application of fungicides, and I again

## Take Time To Double Check Equipment And Verify All Settings

By Robby Wilson

*The snow, ice and cold may make it seem like spring is a lot farther off than it actually is, so my traditional pre-spring comments about equipment and settings aren't really jumping the gun as much as they look today with our fields covered by snow*

*The point I want to make is brief and yet still very important, since it will help you and your Two Rivers to make sure the right rates are applied to your fields when you take out any of the dry fertilizer carts, NH-3 and/or liquid N application equipment we have available.*

*First and foremost, I want everyone to know that the employees at all locations handling your equipment needs do their absolute best to be sure every piece of equipment is functioning properly, is in good condition and repair, and that all settings are where they should be set **BEFORE** the equipment is turned over to the customer.*

*Having made that statement, however, it is still **The Responsibility Of Each Customer** to check the equipment and settings to verify everything is set up properly for the product rates to be applied, and to double check them periodically during the course of the application to make sure they stay at the desired settings.*

*The fact remains it's a long season, the equipment is put through some very tough paces in all sorts of conditions, and the chance for either human or mechanical error is always present.*

*Therefore, it is only logical to take the necessary precautions and to exercise the proper judgement to check and double check the equipment to make sure it is functioning safely and properly, and that all settings/adjustments are as desired.*

want to stress that we are talking about both corn and soybeans.

It's only been in the last couple of years that these enhanced plant health issues have come to the surface, since up until then the use of fungicides on our crops was not given as much attention as it deserved.

Weed and insect issues have pretty much dominated the spotlight of attention, but with the arrival of Asian Soybean Rust in the United States, that has changed.

Trials were first conducted on soybeans to identify the protection fungicides offered against this dreaded disease, and these proved that even in the absence of soybean rust there was a substantial yield boost benefit.

And since it is a fundamental fact of crop production that healthier crop plants stand stronger, perform better

and produce larger yields, numerous trials to evaluate the plant health benefits in corn were a natural extension of the process.

During this past growing season there were some extensive fungicide evaluation trials conducted in both corn and soybeans right here in our local area, and at the February meeting we shared these results with everyone to show how conclusive the case has been made for the benefits and yield-boosting advantages of applying fungicides to optimize plant health.

For example, there was a 17-location study conducted in southern Iowa, with most of those sites in Monroe County, by the way, where the average yield increase in corn for side-by-

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**Fuel Facts**  
By  
**Scott Bensink**

Well, I suppose we all realized that the softening we were experiencing in the fuel markets wouldn't last too long, and as we go to press with this issue of the newsletter heading into the final few days of February, gasoline and diesel prices are continuing to edge steadily higher once again.

And I think we're bound to get some major shocks to follow as we dig out from the winter storm that blasted us the last weekend of the month.

No doubt about it, those diesel fuel contracts that we're offering have suddenly become a lot more attractive when comparing the significant savings they can create for you today with the rather modest savings they offered just 30 days or so ago.

Actually, if you'll look back to last year you'll find we had a very similar trend that seems to be repeating itself today, since it was right about this time of the year in 2006 the market really started to take off after being fairly flat up to and immediately following the post holiday period.

And, as I am sure all of you will recall, once the price increases started coming along in rapid succession, there was no relief in store for us all the way up to and through the spring planting season.

This latest snow and ice storm is likely going to cause a lot of logistic challenges as things start to thaw out and melt, and we will be wanting to get an early start on delivery of fuel to the farms of our customers during the month of March to put the maximum gallons into the country before things break wide open in the fields.

I suspect we'll need to concentrate deliveries into the morning hours to take advantage of overnight lows giving us firm road and farm drive conditions before the sun and warmer daytime temperatures turn everything into muddy, swampy quagmires.

So with that in mind I'll encourage you to get the drives scooped out and a way cleared to your fuel storage as soon as possible to provide sufficient maneuverability and space for our larger bulk delivery trucks to operate, and

for our delivery people to have ready access to your tanks and barrels.

Additionally, I'll highly recommend that if you will be needing more fuel to get your crop in than the amount of fuel storage you have on the farm, that you lock in the remainder of the gallons you'll be needing with a contract as soon as possible.

I fully expect there will be significant challenges and delays encountered at pipelines and terminals this season, and the best way to avoid the impact they could have is to plan ahead, position as much of your fuel on the farm as you can hold as soon as possible, and then to lock in the remainder so we can re-fill our bulk storage with additional back up supplies.

Getting back to delivery of supplies to the farm, also be sure that you get the way cleared for our LP Team to take care of your needs, since those trucks and the delivery staff all need sufficient room to maneuver and access your tanks.

We'll be trying to round out contracted gallon deliveries during March and April so the men handling these services can shift over to assist with the heavy demands of spring services.

Eric is out in the country daily calling on customers to assist them with their oil and lube needs, and he will be more than happy to assist you with putting together your orders.

I suggest you take a moment to ask Eric about the tremendous **TMS Warranty Protection Package** for new and used farm machinery when he stops by, since this is the most comprehensive and complete warranty protection package on the market.

It's **The Best In The Business**, and with the dollars you have invested in your farm machines, the demands you put on them, and the job they do, **They Deserve Only The Best!**

**CROP TALK**

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side plots amounted to a **24 Bushels Per Acre Increase** for plots treated with a fungicide.

An equally extensive study on side-by-side soybean plots in this same geographic area showed a solid **6 Bushel Per Acre Increase** in the bean plots treated with a fungicide.

Now, one of the basic keys to get the maximum benefits from applications of fungicides to corn and/or soybeans is proper timing of the application, and this is why you need to set aside time to Talk To Your Two Rivers Agronomist Soon!

That's because the optimum response to applications of fungicides comes when the application is made later in the season, and thus in many cases needs to be performed using aerial application services.

We had several pilots available at the February meeting, and as I am sure you can well imagine, with the major yield increases timely aerial applications of fungicides will deliver, we need to sort out the logistics of planning and making commitments for pilots and planes well in advance.

This involves getting field maps to the aerial services, locking in acres for planes and pilots, planning fungicide product inventories and all the rest, and as we heard at the February meeting, the acres the pilots and planes can handle during the optimum application window are filling up very fast already.

Your Two Rivers Agronomists can assist you with the planning and decision making processes that will enable you to get the most benefits, advantages and yields from fungicide application strategies, but this is definitely not an in-season issue, it's one that **We Need To Talk About & Plan Now!**

**Timely Pre-Season Reminders**

*If you will be spreading dry fertilizer using one of the cooperative's dry fertilizer carts this spring, keep in mind that we recommend you "Double Spread" the field to assure optimum accuracy of P & K application rates.*

*Spread the entire field at 1/2 the desired and/or recommended rate on the first pass, and then you will be able to adjust the rate to assure the optimum rate is applied as you make the second pass.*

*Also, another reminder that if there are any special or unique input needs you will want to have available this season, be sure to Order Them Now.*

*This would include items such as liquid starter fertilizers, nitrogen stabilizers, seed inoculants, non-traditional herbicide or insecticide products, or any of the many other inputs you may want that are not a standard inventory item.*

*So if you've ordered any of these non-basics in the past and you want to use them again, or if there is something new out there you've seen and want to try, stop in or call and let us know your needs so we can take care of supplying these products when you want/need them.*

**Seed  
&  
Stuff**  
By  
Jay  
Van Woerkom



As Robby talks about in his article, the February meeting we sponsored was one of the best attended meetings we have ever had, and we thank all of the customers who were able to join us for this informative event.

I've had a number of comments about the excellent information that was presented and I also want to thank all of those who have expressed their views on the value of the presentations that were made.

We're about to enter a new and exciting era in crop production as more corn-on-corn acres are considered to meet the projected demand increases for corn, and to capitalize on the market's rewards for additional corn bushels.

In doing so, however, there are a number of factors that we need to consider as we adopt such a major change in the fundamental crop rotation system that's been used for years, and one of these is the potential for increased crop diseases.

Many diseases over-winter on infected corn residues, and lacking the normal rotation to a non-host crop such as soybeans will allow them to thrive.

We must therefore do a better job of identifying, understanding and addressing disease issues and the things we can do to combat them.

It begins with hybrid selection, since we need to plant hybrids with high yield potential that show solid levels of resistance to leaf and stalk diseases, good emergence and seedling vigor.

We also need to address residue management and our tillage systems.

For example, in fields where disease levels were high the previous year, we may want to consider reducing disease risks by burying some of the residues and removing some to eliminate direct contact with the crop.

Planting dates will also be important, since in cooler soils germination, seedling emergence and development are slowed, thus lengthening the time they are more vulnerable to diseases.

Planting the corn following beans before planting corn-on-corn acres would be one way to address this.

Using seed and insecticide treatments, either with the seed or applied separately and, as Robby points out in his article, the timely application of fungicides, will also be major factors in our efforts to control disease, boost plant health, hardiness and yields.

Your Two Rivers Agronomists have the information you need to make a corn-on-corn switch work in your fields, so please talk to us soon.



**Feed  
For  
Thought**  
By  
Jason Smit

We have had a number of customers call or stop in to express an interest in the **Special Twine Booking Program** I have been talking about in previous newsletter articles, and I want to thank everyone who has shared their input with us.

As we start edging closer to spring, the time for talking about this program is ending, and the time for action has arrived, especially because all of the sources of supply I have visited with have been telling me that a price increase on twine is forthcoming in the very near future.

With that in mind, I would like to start finalizing **Twine Booking Orders** over the course of the next few weeks so that we can get a total order package put together and place it with our suppliers to lock in the best supply at the best possible price before we get an increase.

Therefore, I hope that before things start to get too much busier on your farm, as plans and preparations for spring take center stage, that you'll set aside a little time to estimate your upcoming twine needs

and then contact one of the Feed Team to talk to us about the **Special Twine Booking Program** we have put together.

This is something that's relatively new for our co-op and customers, but it works much like the other booking programs we offer that you've used for other crop and livestock inputs, and even fuel and energy supplies over the years.

There are convenient and flexible payment terms, convenient and flexible delivery terms, and most importantly there are significant savings available to you for booking your needs in advance rather than buying in-season and paying top dollar.

In other news, we're starting to get calls already from a number of sources who are looking for outdoor facilities that they can place pigs into once the spring season and warmer weather arrives.

If you have outdoor facilities that will accommodate a group or groups of pigs and are interested in additional information on this, please do not hesitate getting in touch with Joe or me for all the details.

I'll also mention that we continue to be presented with numerous attractive contracting opportunities for pork production, with a full range of options and flexibility in ownership as well as investment alternatives available.

Many of these include options that provide the individual with a source of nutrients from the facilities, and we welcome the opportunity to talk to anyone who is interested in finding out more about these opportunities and which of them can be the best fit for their farm and their specific needs.

**Call Anytime** and Joe or I will be more than happy to meet with you to discuss your interests and what opportunities we have available to match them.

**Congratulations To The Two Rivers Seed Team  
JAY VAN WOERKOM & MATT VAN WEELDEN  
For Being Recognized By Croplan Genetics  
TOP 10% IN SEED SALES**

*At a recent event held in Minneapolis and sponsored by Croplan Genetics, the nation's 4th largest seed company, Two Rivers Cooperative Seed Sales Representatives Jay Van Woerkom & Matt Van Weelden were recognized as being in the Top 10% in total seed sales volumes out of over 3,500 seed sales representatives from the entire Land O' Lakes system marketing seed in 33 states.*

*In offering our congratulations to Jay and Matt, we express our thanks and appreciation to all of our seed customers for their support and business that have been given to make this national recognition possible.*



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

In early February the members of Two Rivers Cooperative received a letter in the mail outlining the Board of Director's decision to add to our grain storage and handling capabilities and capacities at the Monroe location by utilizing the **Condominium Storage Concept**.

I also discussed this issue in some detail in my February newsletter article, which you can access on the Two Rivers web site under the Archives section for additional reference.

In the days that have passed since the February newsletter and this announcement were mailed, we have received a number of calls and inquiries in the office from customers who have had additional questions, who wanted additional details, and who wished to express their interest in owning space in these facilities.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have called, stopped in and who have shown an interest in this project. We appreciate your input and the interest that has been expressed.

In this month's article I hope to provide you with additional information and details on the benefits and advantages of owning space in this condo storage project, and why we feel this is an exceptionally good opportunity for our customers to address their storage needs as we look to the future and the changing markets and marketplace in which we are now operating.

I suppose the biggest and best advantage that come from owning space in a condo storage facility is the tremendous flexibility which it offers to the individual farmer and farming operation.

You own the space, and it is yours to use to store corn, soybeans or both up to the total amount of space you own.

Furthermore, while the bins are being put up in Monroe, you can deliver bushels to any of the Two Rivers elevator locations and simply designate

those volumes to be credited to your condo storage account, again up to the volume of space that each member owns.

Another major benefit is that you can address your need for additional grain storage capacities to accommodate today's larger crops without having to sacrifice space and tie up land on your own farming operation.

At the same time, however, you are still able to utilize the normal investment and tax advantages that are common to adding storage facilities at home.

Another very big advantage of owning space in condo storage facilities is that for a nominal service fee of what we believe will be 5 cents per bushel per year, Two Rivers will assume full responsibility for maintaining grain quality and condition for your bushels.

That frees you from the time, labor and expense of monitoring and checking bins, breaking up crusts on the top surface, running aeration fans to cool grain in the fall and warm it up in spring, and of course eliminates the losses and discounts associated with molds, insects, rodents, crusting, spoiling, hot spots etc.

You also free up the time, labor and costs of filling bins at home, and loading out and hauling grain to town for sale, and of course the elimination of added handling steps will also help reduce damage and shrink, since you are able to deliver straight into any elevator location at harvest.

Putting your grain into the condo space you own also positions it so you have added flexibility and freedom in marketing those bushels at any time, and you can still make use of the full range of marketing tools and programs

Two Rivers offers.

This is a great advantage for those of you who enjoying traveling, family vacations and/or who are away for a period of time in the winter season, or for those who have exceptionally busy schedules, since you will no longer need to be on the spot to load bushels out of farm bins to take advantage of market rallies, but can instead execute sales out of your condo stored grain with just a quick phone call to the office.

You also have the flexibility and freedom of loading bushels out of your storage space at a nominal load out fee, which we anticipate will be around 8 cents per bushel.

Additionally, if for any reason you do not anticipate needing to use your condo space for a year, you can authorize its use by someone else, providing we receive notification from you of your decision by September 1st for the year you're not using the space.

There are, of course, other issues involved, and I encourage you to feel free to contact Craig in Otley, Nick in Monroe, Gene or me in Pella if you have any additional questions or there are other issues of interest you want more information about.

Your Board and management feel this is a very good opportunity for our members to address the crucial issue of providing additional storage space and flexibility in handling their crops for this coming year, and on into the future, to do so with the greatest flexibility, and to take advantage of many unique benefits and advantages that owning space in condo storage facilities offers, while at the same time eliminating many time/labor and expense factors for their farm.



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