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Challenging Spring Precedes Tremendous Growing Season



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Thanks for your patience this spring. It was a challenging season to say the least. Many are saying they've never seen a spring like the one we had this year. We are very grateful for the understanding and support we received as we coped with delays getting into fields.



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Once your wheat has been combined, take the opportunity to get those acres soil tested for next year's crop. It may seem early, but it will be one less housekeeping chore to have out of the way for next year. Remember, there's no better basis for evaluating available nutrients than testing.

Properly managing the amount of nutrients added to the soil provides value to your bottom line.

So far, alfalfa yields have been tremendous. However, just like your other enterprises, a well-managed fertilizer program is key to maintaining efficient and profitable alfalfa production. Soil test as needed later this season to determine which nutrients need to be replenished after such a high-tonnage season. Fall applications will provide time for the nutrients to break down for plant usage prior to the 2008 hay crop.

So what is the fertilizer outlook? At this point, supplies are not expected to be an issue, but prices are expected to stay flat for the near term.

Our crop scouting team is out in full force, so don't hesitate to call if you are suspecting insect damage. We've seen an increase in aphids and bean leaf beetles across the Watertown Co-op trade territory. Our scouting capabilities are an important resource of your cooperative, helping you make informed pest-management decisions.

Contact us this fall to schedule strip tilling. Because of its success, we continue to see an increase in strip tillage acres. We'll also be able to variable rate apply through the strip tiller, so please call Trevor at 605-237-4404 to talk about this service.

We hope to see you at the new Answer Plot location later this summer. ●



Alfalfa and Answer Plot Updates

By Brian Kohlenberg *Retail Seed Sales Manager • bkohlenberg@landolakes.com*



Hello from the Watertown Co-op seed department. I hope you're having a great summer. I just have a couple of items I want to touch on, beginning with alfalfa. Now is the time to be "reading" your alfalfa stand to determine whether it is economical to leave the stand in or tear it up.

Reading the stand

Begin by digging up several plants from different locations throughout the field. Cut into the taproot and assess the plant according to the chart below. A healthy root will be firm and white or slightly yellow. Crown rot is present in the field if roots have dark brown areas extending down the center.

If you get an average root score of greater than two from 10 to 20 specimens across the field, consider rotating to another crop that will benefit from alfalfa's nitrogen (N) credit—between 80 and 120 units of nitrogen. Assuming nitrogen is \$0.30 per unit of N, you receive \$24 to \$36 per acre in added value from your alfalfa crop.

PLANT DENSITY

<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>PLANTS/SQ. FT.</u>
Fall of seeding year	15–25
1st production year	10–15
2nd production year	6–10
3rd production year	4–6

STEM DENSITY

<u>(STEMS/SQ. FT.)</u>	<u>SUGGESTED ACTION</u>
>55	Stem density not limiting yield
40–55	Some yield reduction expected
<40	Consider replacing stand

PLANT HEALTH

<u>AVERAGE ROOT SCORE</u>	<u>SUGGESTED ACTION</u>
0–2	Keep stand in production
2–3	Consider replacing stand
3–5	Rotate stand out of production

New Answer Plot location

Our Answer Plot has moved to south of Highway 14 between Arlington and Volga. What hasn't changed is the unique opportunity for you to see the latest hybrids and varieties in soil and weather conditions similar to those on your farm. It's a

hands-on experience, where you'll be in the field, digging up roots, picking the ears, and seeing the results firsthand. Our agronomy experts are on site to sort out the answers to questions about nutrient management and pest control, as well as to explain the profitability each technology can offer and how it applies to your growing challenges.

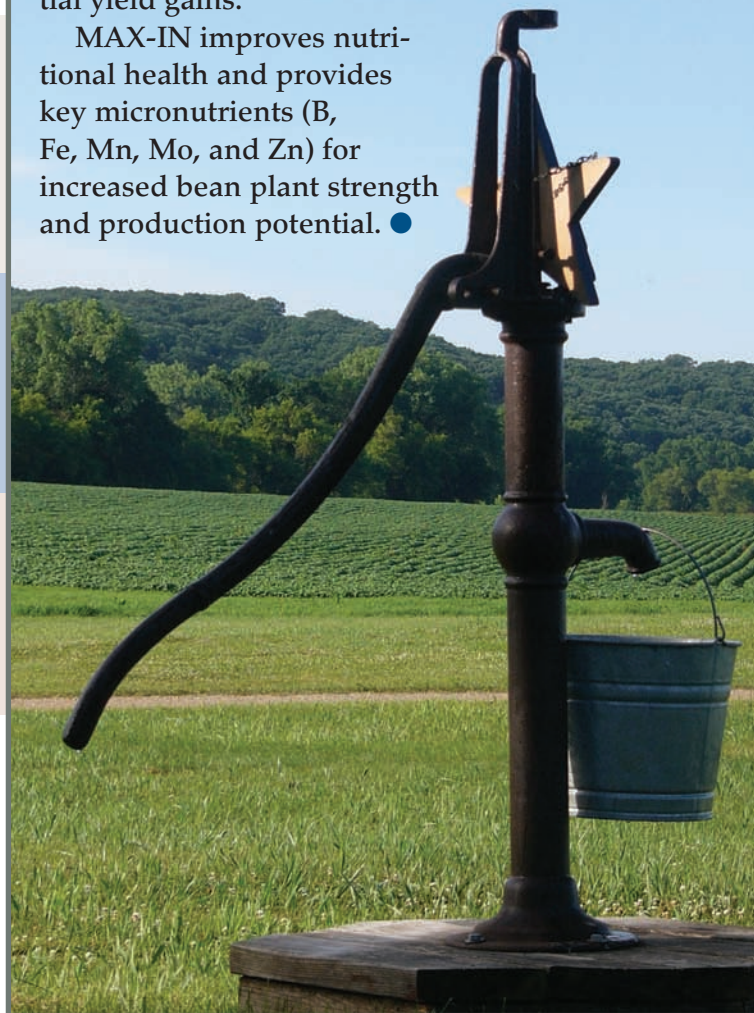
Call now to arrange a visit, or watch for the date of our growers' tour. ●

MAX-IN™ for Soybeans

Last year we saw good results with this new topical product by Agrilience.

It provides secondary nutrients and micronutrients to your beans. Especially if you have some Roundup® to apply, consider adding MAX-IN to your tank mix. It's a convenient way to add potential yield gains.

MAX-IN improves nutritional health and provides key micronutrients (B, Fe, Mn, Mo, and Zn) for increased bean plant strength and production potential. ●



Creeping for Profitability

By Jon Hegge *Feed Department Manager • jon.wce@midconetwork.com*

Our staff here at the feed mill hopes that you and your family are having a great summer. Hopefully, you will be able to take some time off for a family vacation.

We have had some much-needed rain to get field crops developing well and pasture grass growing. Even with what are generally lush pastures across our trade territory, a creep-feeding program is still recommended. As pasture grasses mature and decline in protein and energy, creep provides a viable solution for managing cow-herd nutrition.

Creep stretches out the grass, helping maintain cow condition. The practice also provides enhanced levels of vitamins and trace minerals to help the calf's immune system function properly. Generally, weaning weights of creep-fed calves increase by 50 to 100 pounds compared with non-creep-fed calves. These are just a few of the benefits. Please stop by and talk to us about how we can make creep work in your operation.

Cows need care, too

Don't let all that good grass lull you into forgetting about cow-herd nutrition. A mineral program now will

keep your cows in good shape for the following season. The right minerals help conception rates and lead to healthier and stronger calves for next year. We have a great mineral lineup to help your herd. We can even blend a custom mineral ration to more specifically fit your needs.

Feeds for all your livestock

We have the feedstuffs and ration know-how to formulate rations for dairy, swine, sheep, and horses. Call us with any questions that you may have about the nutrition needs of your livestock. We will do our very best to help your operation out.

Thanks so much for your past business. As always, we can't wait to work with you in the future. Enjoy the rest of summer and make it a safe one. ●



JUST A RUN-OF-THE-MILL DAY...

...At the Feed Mill

Feed mill operations at Watertown Co-op are thriving, adapting to the many changes that have occurred in the feeding industry in the past few years. Our feed is produced according to exacting specifications required by customers. For instance, in June, 150 tons of complete feeds were being processed daily through the mill. ●



Watching the numbers as he mixes up another load of feed is Robert Herr.



Allen Bjerke weighs up the ingredients for another custom-mix feed order.

We have creep feeders for sale, rent, or lease-to-own. Stop in and check out which program would work best for you.



Creep-Feeding Tips

Don't put an empty feeder in the pasture or turn pairs out when an empty feeder is sitting there. Calves will check it out and stay away from it, thinking that it is empty. Place feeders in herd-friendly locations. After they start eating creep well, then you can move the feeder around to help control consumption and improve grazing distribution. Don't let the feeders run empty, especially late in the season. ●

New Agronomist in the Country

It's a beautiful early afternoon in glacial lakes country. Agronomist **Lars Enerson**, with an ATV loaded in his pickup, is ready to head for Lily and wherever else his co-op customers need him. The four-wheeler? A definite necessity because of the uncharacteristically abundant amount of moisture received across this whole region of late.

Lars has been on the job at **Watertown Co-op** since May, the same month he graduated from NDSU with a crop and weed science major and an agribusiness minor. The North Dakota native comes from a family farm near Stanley, part of the wide, rolling small grain country in the northwest corner of the state.

But while the corn and soybean landscape here is plenty different from the country Lars called home, he has recently been much farther away. Sandwiched into time spent pursuing his degree was a 15-month stint in Iraq with the 141st guard unit out of Jamestown. His engineering unit returned stateside in February 2005.

And now, says Lars, he couldn't have landed in a better spot. "The producers here have been excellent to work with. Plus with the value-added opportunities from the growing ethanol and biodiesel industries, it's just an exciting time for agriculture."

Lars was hired as an agronomist to serve primarily the Webster location, but transitions across the

cooperative have expanded his role to also include the Watertown and Henry locations. "All it takes is a phone call. I can come out and walk through the fields, putting together economically feasible recommendations for higher yields and enhanced profitability," says Lars. "Because that's obviously what it's all about."



The new agronomist comes to this region at a pivotal time. The Roundup Ready® cropping system has been tremendously successful for efficiently managing weed issues. But the emergence of resistant weed populations is providing new challenges in management.

"We've seen it become a big focus," says Lars. "We can no longer rely on the exact same chemistries year after year. We're having to spike applications with different

chemistries and different modes of action to better control weed spectrums. With proactive management, we can prevent more resistance from developing."

Plus, whatever 'normal' is, did not occur this spring. Constant shots of rain prevented timely weed applications, while jump-starting weed growth. "Obviously, I'm new here, but they tell me this was not a typical spring. That is one thing I'm relishing, too. Getting out and visiting with growers. You learn a lot in school, but there's nothing like the hands-on relationship that comes from working with growers, getting out in the fields, and just the gratifying aspect of helping them find solutions." ●

Mission Statement: To profitably enhance the success of our patrons.



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Henry Branch	605-532-5812



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