

Winter 2017

Pro-Ag News



A Tough Harvest

This was one of the toughest harvests that I can remember in a long time. With all the rain we had in September and October, the fields were saturated causing a lot of grief getting stuck and going around low spots. As I write this article in the middle of November, the corn harvest is still going strong and will probably continue into December.

This year, the average soybean yields were lower than the bumper crop we had last year. Corn yields this year were excellent and compared very close to last years yields. The past several years we bagged all of the surplus grain we received during harvest. With the large crops we have been having, this got to be too expensive to continue. The decision was made this summer to erect a 500,000 bushel corn bunker at the Parkers Prairie location. The bunker has aeration and will have a tarp on it once it is filled.

In the fall newsletter I wrote about the upcoming merger vote with Hoffman Cooperative Grain Association. On September 20th the vote was held at the Hoffman Community Center. The members of the cooperative voted 88.4 percent in favor of the merger. The merger will become effective January 1, 2018. We are currently in the process of combining all of Hoffman's customers, products, patronage and grain position into our system for a seamless transition on January 1st. We are very excited about this new venture and have been working closely with them this fall.

Before we know it, it will be time for Pro-Ag's annual meeting. As required, this is the notice to our membership that we will

have an election for a vacancy on the board. This District runs east of the Otter Tail/Todd county line and north of Eagle Bend and Clarissa. If you live in this area and are interested in running for the board, contact one of these nominating committee members:

Al Blommel: 218.756.2554

Steve Dobratz: 218.338.8099

Russ Elliot: 320.808.6892

All nominations for the board must come through the nomination committee. There will be no nominations from the floor on the day of the meeting.

As our producers start planning for next year's crop inputs, it is also important to plan for your financial needs. We have several options available for our producers whether it is for crop input or feed financing. These financing companies offer very competitive interest rates. For more details, visit with the staff at our agronomy or feed mill locations. Unfortunately, those customers who were past due (according to our credit policy) will be on a cash basis. With the low commodity prices nobody can afford to lose discounts and pay 18 percent interest. Let us help by looking at the options we have available.

Happy Holidays!

Mark Jaskowiak
General Manager
Parkers Prairie - Main Office



A Time to Wind Down

Those of us that live in rural areas are more aware of the passing of the seasons than most. There is a sense of urgency that everyone in the ag industry feels at spring planting time. Making hay, spraying weeds or combining before it rains again or getting fall fertilizer down and tillage done prior to sub-zero temps and locking up the fields for another year. By the time this article hits the mailbox, I hope harvest is wrapped up and we can all take a breath and relax during the holiday season. Winter always ends up being the planning season for the next crop year. It's a good time to look at what worked and what didn't, fix or replace machinery or start budgeting for the next crop year cycle. One truth over many years of being in ag retail is that the best prices on chemistry, seed and usually fertilizer are early in the year. With tight farm margins, prepaying product is one thing that will help you save dollars per acre in a tough year. Most vendors we work with offer large enough discounts to cover any interest expense that is incurred from buying early. Once again, we will be working with Cooperative Finance Association on producer finance options for 2018. This

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allows us to take applications and issue operating notes to Pro-Ag customers for crop inputs. For more details, ask your Pro-Ag location manager or agronomy sales staff.

Speaking of staff, Pro-Ag has hired some new people in the agronomy department at the Brandon and Clarissa locations. One of our greatest struggles in rural Minnesota is finding employees that are willing to work the same long hours our patrons do. Turnover is becoming more of an issue as the millennial generation in general is unwilling to sacrifice family

life for salary. We are fortunate to have several new employees on staff that really are willing to put in the effort to meet our patrons needs. Please take the time to stop in and get to know the new staff and look into preliminary crop plans for 2018.

In general, per acre costs for seed are flat to down, chemistry is down and fertilizer is up slightly. The nitrogen market is the most volatile with the United States being the lowest price on the world market. This has resulted in some US product being put out on the world market. Urea prices are up \$50 per ton or roughly \$8-9 per acre for corn. With a limited anhydrous ammonia application this fall, it looks like there will be considerable pressure on urea tons this spring for the pre-plant market. In addition to that issue, many retailers have delayed purchasing high value urea before river freeze up with little farmer interest. We may be setting ourselves up for a tight supply situation at river open. A sound strategy for 2018 may be to put a minimum amount of N down, pre-plant and hope the market corrects prior to topdress season on corn and then apply most of the urea at topdress time. Historically, this has given the highest yields in our lighter soils, but also has proven to drive bigger yields on heavy soils too. The savings per ton are usually enough to cover the cost of custom application, or we have spreaders that are set up for broadcasting if a grower wishes to apply nitrogen with their own tractor and labor.

Pro-Ag is positioned to service your agronomy needs and we look forward to working with you on planning for the 2018 crop. Thanks for your business and Happy Holidays.



Jim Hlatky
Agronomy Manager
Parkers Prairie – Main Office

A Quiet December

Grain markets are quiet in December like most years and the USDA has given us a record corn yield of 175 on corn and 49 on soybeans. This means there is an increased carryout and many bushels of corn to chew through. We have achieved these yields even with weather problems in Iowa and the eastern corn belt, along with a drought in the Dakotas. The ability of corn to yield is impressive as there were areas that were way too dry and to the east – late planting or replanting multiple times. Looking forward to next summer – this may impact the ability of corn to rally as the summer of 2017 will not be forgotten in trader minds!

If you haven't heard, we are in the process of merging with Hoffman Coop Grain. Hoffman runs a feed and grain division at their facility. This will bring us up to a combined six locations to source grain. This is a great fit for both companies as Pro-Ag needs better access to the export markets and Hoffman could use more volume at their facility as they are in a very competitive area. This move should help us be more competitive in the marketplace and allow us to ship grain out in a timely fashion, versus waiting on trucks or a market to open up in the past. The only way to get good rail rates is to be a shuttle shipper and Hoffman has that capability. We are currently moving soybeans to Hoffman and expect that in the future a good share of our grain purchases will be put on the shuttles out of Hoffman.

"This move should help us to be more competitive in the marketplace and allow us to ship grain out in a timely fashion..."

As I write this letter, it is near Thanksgiving and I would like to thank the Hoffman Coop board and their General Manager Danny Pinske. Also, thanks to Jim Nelson for being our facilitator. Without them, this merger would not have happened for our cooperative. The ability to post grain bids with confidence is a huge improvement and I am excited about our future!

Have a Merry Christmas!



Tim Lauthen
Grain Merchandiser
Brandon Elevator

PLAN for the New Year... Make it Your Resolution!

2018

With harvest wrapped up, feed inventories were abundant again this year. We can be very thankful for that, but that doesn't mean we don't go into the next year without a plan for managing our inventories. Too often we get to feeding this or feeding that because we were in a hurry and it was the next closest bunker, bag, or row, or it was the easiest silo to get going. Now is the time to take a step back and evaluate a plan or feeding strategy for the year. I try to do this with the producers I service, or at least get them to think about how they are going to feed things for the next year. Part of this process goes with knowing some of the quality of feed you have and being proactive to sample things as they came off the field or as they went into their designated storage.

Why is planning this important you ask? For a number of reasons: Number one, because it forces you to get a good hard number for inventory purposes, so you know how much you can feed on a daily basis to make that forage stretch to next growing season/harvest. Number two, it helps to make the decisions of matching the best feedstuffs together to get optimal milk production. The goal of all of this would be to put together the ration with the best ROI to achieve the most consistent production and components possible for the entire year. In the current ag economy, we can't afford to not move forward with a plan. This not only applies to our feed inventories, but all other aspects of the dairy as well. If you would like assistance developing your plan for the year, feel free to contact any of your Pro Ag representatives. Hope your holiday season is blessed with lots of joy and happiness.



Ben Thorpe
Livestock Production Specialist
Serving All Locations

On the Cow Side of Things

I can't believe that fall is nearly over, and Christmas is right around the corner. That usually means that calves are weaned and the cows are home and grazing some stalks. One might not realize that preparation for the next calving season is in full swing.

On the cow side of things, now is the perfect time to rebuild her body condition. Once the calf is weaned the cow's requirements will go down 30 percent. Kicking her out to a fall pasture or on some stalks along with a supplement is a great way for her to rebuild herself before moving into the harshness of winter and her third trimester. A perfect supplement for this is the Accuration Block. The Accuration Block incorporates the intake modifying technology, which encourages snack eating throughout the day, which leads to better forage digestion. The block is designed to complement your forages, meaning the better quality forage the less they are to eat and the poorer quality forage the more they are going to eat. This block is designed to help you gain body condition and we would expect to see intakes anywhere from a half pound to two and a half pounds per day depending on the condition of your cows and forage quality. Cows that are in a more constant body condition have potential for improved conception rates, calf performance, weaning weights and

performance on the next generation of calf crop. Another option is the Rangeland 38 High E tub, this tub is cooked so it will be a little harder and is designed for less intake than the AR block. It is made to supplement poorer quality forage. Being a higher energy tub than most of our tubs, it is perfect for replacements and younger cows. Please feel free to contact me to talk more on which tub would fit your situation best.

I wish you the best of luck the rest of this fall with harvest, stay safe! Again, please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions, I would enjoy getting to know you and more about your operation and how I can help you.

Katie Nelson
Beef Livestock Production Specialist
320.290.5136
knelson@landolakes.com

*"Please feel free to contact me to
talk more on which tub would fit
your situation best."*

Welcome



We are pleased to announce the addition of Tom Dirkes to the Clarissa Feed Mill team as our Mill Operations Supervisor. Tom comes to us with 21 years of experience in the Ag industry, 12 of those years as a feed mill Manager. Tom currently lives with his wife, Theresa, and their four children in the Osakis, Minnesota area. Please help me welcome him to our team.

Exciting News for Pro-Ag!

Today I want to share some exciting news for the patrons and prospects of Pro-Ag Farmers Cooperative. Form-A-Feed, Inc. has purchased Domain, Inc. in New Richmond, Wisconsin. What does that mean? It means with the Domain purchase, a few nationally known brands come with it. Pro-Ag patrons will now have the ability to purchase both the DoBoy branded feeds such as Tend-R-Leen and Crop Cure. Why the purchase? Domain was privately owned and was one of the oldest feed companies in the world. Being privately owned, it was a natural fit for Form-A-Feed, Inc. being a Nelson Family Company.

Tend-R-Leen is a "no forage" whole corn / pellet program for the use in steer stuffer programs. Research started in the late 1950's and in 1959 the first combination of Holstein and Hereford steers were fed in a research environment. In 1963, the Tend-R-Leen program was introduced to dairy beef producers nationwide. Very little has changed in formulation with the exception of different lonophore options that are now available.

There is only one Tend-R-Leen:

- Simple program, no grinding or processing of corn
- Less equipment and labor required
- Facilities can easily be adapted to fit program needs
- Up to three pound average daily gains or better
- Less than six to one feed to gain from birth to market

- Lowest cost per pound gain, based on research competitive programs
- Cattle yield high quality, lean, tender meat that meets consumer and packer demands
- No competitive program has ever been able to demonstrate and document research that beat the Tend-R-Leen program.

OVER 50 YEARS OF RESEARCH AND OVER 10 MILLION STEERS ARE FED ON THE TEND-R-LEEN PROGRAM!

"Our goal is to provide beef producers with the best possible program which produces outstanding gains for higher profits and top-quality meat."

Look for an invite to a producer informational meeting coming soon! Please contact one of the Pro-Ag locations with questions, or call me and we will get you started!

Thank You for your business and Happy Holidays!

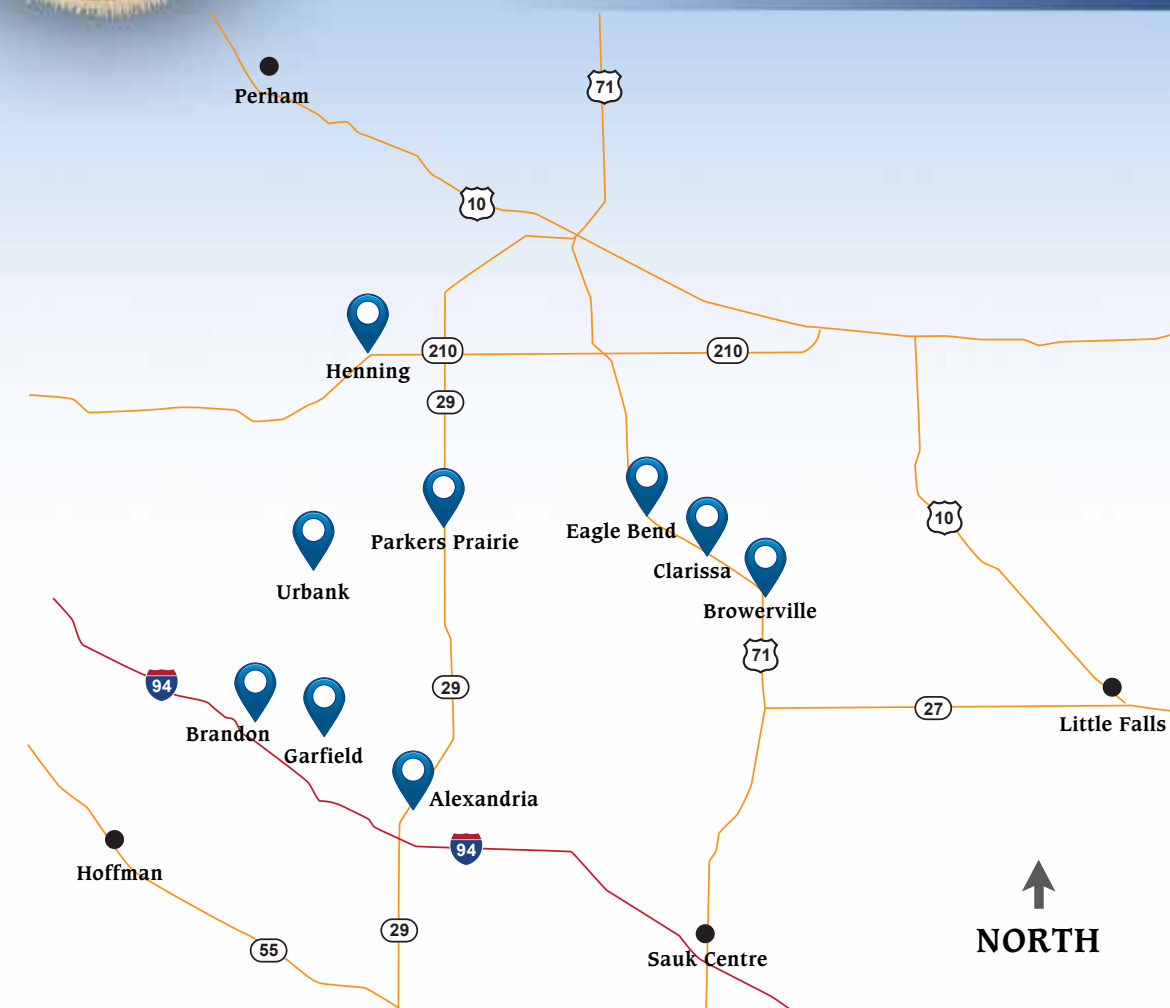


Tom Giese
Livestock Nutritionist
Garfield Feed Mill



LOCATIONS

PROAGFARMERS.COM



Alexandria Country Store
806 22nd Avenue E
Alexandria, MN 56308
Phone: 320.763.5445

Brandon Elevator
104 East Front Street
P.O. Box 38
Brandon, MN 56315
Phone: 320.524.2282

Brandon Fertilizer Plant
4911 County Road 7 NW
Brandon, MN 56315
Phone: 320.524.2286

Clarissa Feed & Fertilizer
209 North Bridge Street
Clarissa, MN 56440
Phone: 800.432.6340
Fax: 218.756.2451

Browerville
501 Railroad Avenue
Browerville, MN 56438
Phone: 320.594.2415

Eagle Bend Farm Store & Elevator
325 North Street E
Eagle Bend, MN 56446
Phone: 800.289.7081
Fax: 218.738.2553

Garfield Feed Plant
204 Sanstead Street W
P.O. Box 49
Garfield, MN 56332
Phone: 877.479.6531

Henning Ag & LP Plant
313 Inman Street
Henning, MN 56551
Phone: 888.749.0192

Parkers Fertilizer/Elevator
210 South Railroad Avenue
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
Phone: 218.338.6051

Parkers Prairie Main Office
601 East Soo Street, Suite A
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
Phone: 866.775.3835

Urbank Feed/Hardware/ Grocery
13 Central Avenue S
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
Phone: 218.267.2401



Parkers Prairie Main Office
 601 East Soo Street, Suite A
 Parkers Prairie, MN 56361



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Underwood
218-826-6560

Brandon
320-834-4949

FARM, TRUCK & AUTO SERVICE:
 Oil Changes, Tire & Wheel Alignments

TRUCK & TRAILER REPAIR:
 DOT Inspection

DRIVE SHAFT WORK:
 Hydraulic Cylinder Repair

FARM, TESTED. FARMER INSPIRED.



**Wood
Splitter/
Tree Shear**

*Bolt together design, 1 unit
can be configured 3 ways*



Rock Bucket



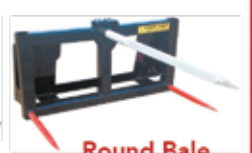
Pallet Fork



**Tree &
Post Puller**



**Equipment
Mover**



**Round Bale
Spear**

MRF SKID LOADER ATTACHMENTS

Manure Fork
 Manure Fork Grapple
 3Pt Gooseneck Tow Bar
 Rock Bucket Grapple
 Brush Grapple
 Material Bucket
 Material Bucket Grapple
 Snow Bucket

Tree Scoop
 Quick Tach Plates
 Stall Plow
 Freestall Groomer

Sand Spreader
 Bale Squeezer
 Replacement German
 Tines

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 6X12 Flair Side
 6X12 Straight Side

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 8X16 Premium

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ATTACHMENTS AND TRAILERS**



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