

SPRING 2019 NEWSLETTER



With a new year starting, it is time for our year-end audit which was just completed. This has been the 21st year of Pro-Ag Farmers Co-op and sales were up for the year as we marketed much more grain with the Hoffman merger that took effect at the beginning of the year. We also saw an increase in our agronomy and propane divisions. We had a profitable year, although decreasing from last year as we continue to see tough economic times in agriculture, especially in the dairy industry. The soybean tariffs also had an impact on our grain division.

Sales for 2018 were \$99,781,515 compared to last year at \$82,774,881. Profits from the regional cooperatives that we do business with are also being affected by the agricultural economy. Combined local and regional refunds for the year exceeded \$1.1 million.

At the annual meeting in March, we will be issuing dividends on a percentage of profit by division. Thirty percent of your dividend will be paid in cash, which amounts to \$200,132. The remaining seventy percent will be distributed in stock.

We did receive an equity

MARK JASKOWIAK
General Manager
Parkers Prairie - Main Office



retirement on milk marketed with First District Association, so we will be able to retire milk equities for 50 percent of the year 2011, for a total of \$49,021. The board of directors at their last meeting authorized an equity payout on Ag Supply stock. We will be paying all of the year 2000 ag supply equity which amounts to \$210,064. We will also be making an equity payout on the Central Ag stock amounting to \$105,032 and due to the recent merger, we will be paying Hoffman Co-op equity in the amount of \$47,083. The total amount of cash Pro-Ag will be paying out to our stockholders this year is \$611,331.

With the end of the year audit completed, it is time for our annual meeting. As I mentioned in my last newsletter article, we have five board positions open at this annual meeting. I am repeating this information so everyone is aware of these open positions. Remember that all board nominations must come through the nominating committee.

There will be no nominations from the floor on the day of the meeting.

Following is a brief description of the areas open this year.

Region 1 director at large covers our western territory from Hoffman, Brandon, Evansville, Millerville through Battle Lake.

District 2 covers the Hoffman area.

District 3 covers the Parkers and Henning area.

District 4 covers the Carlos, Alexandria and Forada area.

District 6 covers the Clarissa and Browerville area.

If you live in the above areas and are interested in running for the board contact one of these nominating committee members.

Russ Elliott	218-948-2429
Chuck Debilzen	218-267-2291
Jerry Korfe	218-371-7050

Thank you for your support that makes this possible. I hope to see you at the annual meeting on March 21st at the Event Center in Parkers Prairie. Look for the annual meeting notice in this issue of the newsletter.

Have a safe spring.

Mark

SUPPLEMENTS FOR OPTIMAL HEALTH AND BREEDING



**TONY
KOKETT**

Feed Department Manager
Garfield Feed Elevator



Few things are as important as pre-calving nutrition. The last trimester of gestation is the most critical period in the life of this year's newborn calf and also next year's calf. What is done for the fetus at this time impacts its survivability, long-term health and performance. Meanwhile, what we do at this time for the cow, affects her future breeding performance.

The pre-calving body condition score (BCS) is important. For the majority of cows with an average BCS (5-6), pregnancy rates were average with a large number performing 3-5% above average despite poor spring and summer range conditions.

It's a common misperception that restricting a heifer's protein intake will reduce calf size and thus calving difficulty. While the calf will likely be smaller at birth, it will also

be weaker and, the heifer will be smaller and less mature. Producers believe that high-protein diets cause bigger calves, but perhaps the calves are only reaching their genetic potential.

Copper, zinc, manganese and selenium are commonly recognized as the cow's most critical minerals. All minerals are important to the calf, since the cow is the single source of nutrients for the calf during gestation and the first months of the calf's life.

One important factor to remember in supplementing the pregnant cow before calving, is response time. If you are supplementing any nutrient – protein, energy or trace mineral –

to reduce stress or correct a problem, it must be fed for an adequate period of time before the problem occurs. Feeding must continue during the entire stress or problem period.

Pro-Ag can help with any supplement that you may need. We carry a full line of cattle minerals that can be force fed or free choiced – whatever may fit your operation. Tubs can also be used to supplement your cows if you need protein or just need to supplement minerals and trace minerals to help with the health of your cows and your calves. Feel free to give me a call any Pro Ag feed location and we will help in anyway we can.

Have a safe and enjoyable winter season.

Tony Kokett

RIGHT SIZING YOUR REPLACEMENT PROGRAM



We all seem to get caught up in wanting more of a good thing. But when is too much of a good thing, bad?

I pose this question in relationship to our heifer replacement numbers. On many of the dairies I visit, there seems to be one common question asked, “Do you know anyone looking to buy heifers?” We have done such a good job of getting our cows pregnant and have made strides in heifer health and retention that we now all have an abundance of replacements.

So, what do we do about it? Should I sell them – even at a loss – for my cost of raising that heifer? I would argue that often the better option is to take the upfront payment from selling the heifers, reduce some bills or invest in other areas of the dairy, and then correct my heifer numbers to what I need to sustain my cull rate or a little more.

One might ask, why would you sell an animal at a loss to the cost of

**BEN
THORPE**

Livestock
Production Specialist
Serving All Locations



raising it? The answer to that is not easy to swallow, but it's one that's important for the long-term profitability of the dairy. We need to be milking more cows that are second lactation or greater and keep cows in the herd longer. Those are the cows that are the most profitable.

A heifer takes halfway through her second lactation to turn profitable. Selling heifers sooner allows for an immediate cash income that can be spent in other aspects of the dairy needing attention. Once we get the heifer numbers dialed in to sustain culling rates of the herd, we can begin to see other benefits.

Feeding less animals requires less feed, bedding and time. All three of which free up resources to be used in other aspects of the dairy, or just to take a much needed break! The

decreased animal numbers should allow for more pen space per head, which reduces health incidents and injuries. We know that when we have fewer health incidences along with a balance ration, we can increase growth rates. By increasing growth rates we can get that heifer in the herd sooner reducing the herds average age at first calving. Feeding heifers for longer than 21-23 months can be a detriment to the profitability on a dairy.

Our team at Purina has helped many dairies achieve their goals and improve profitability by using some of these strategies. We have many tools and spreadsheets we can use to help you figure out what right-sizing your replacement program would have on your operation. If you would like help in evaluating this, please contact one of us and we would be happy to help you.

Thank you to Dr. Amber Hazel for ideas and inspiration for this article.

FORAGE SAMPLING FOR ANIMAL PROTECTION



**TOM
GIESE**
Nutritionist
612-618-6148

Hello there,
As we look forward to spring thaws and warmer weather, there are a couple things to keep in mind as we are handling our feedstuffs. This past fall and winter I have had several beef and dairy farms that have shown some negative effects from high mold and yeast counts in their forages. Clinical signs, such as being off feed, irregular dry matter intakes and reproductive issues, have all been documented. If you are noticing any of these symptoms, you may be dealing with mold and/or yeast issues. Additionally, mold and yeast counts will accelerate in growth as temperatures warm up.

The quickest and easiest way to curb these negatives is to cut back the amount of forage that is identified as the problem. If levels

are really high, you may want to quit feeding that feed all together. I realize that nobody wants to throw away feed, but in some cases that is the best answer for the health of your cattle. We do have products available at Pro-Ag that act as flow agents to help protect your animals.

Call us and we'll get samples pulled for you – especially, if you feel you may have a problem brewing. If you wish to pull the samples yourself, here are some sampling tips:

- Pull samples from several locations within the storage area and mix it together to make one sample

- Try to avoid sampling from the beginning or end of a load
- Store samples in a cool, dry location

- Do not freeze samples, as this can cause inaccurate results. While it won't affect toxins much, yeast counts could be altered

- Limit the amount of time between pulling a sample to mailing it to the lab the most you can

- It is best to pull and mail a sample early in the week so the sample is not in the mail over the weekend

Hopefully, you will not experience any of these issues with your forages this spring. If you do, please call. We can help!

Thank You,
Tom Giese
612-618-6148

QUALITY SUPPORT FOR GRAIN MARKETING



Phase one of the expansion project is nearly complete with a 400,000 bu tank, truck load out bin, screenings bin, a screener, and distributor. We've also upgraded to a drive-through farm truck scanner system that ties directly into our existing grain software. In order to dump your truck at the new terminal, you will need a new scanner card and verification will only be required for name changes or splits. Look for more information as we plan a demonstration day when patrons can get new truck cards.

Phase two of construction is underway, including the bulk weigh out and rail car loading/unloading. Rail design work is nearly completed, enabling us to handle longer grain trains and the capacity to load about 20 rail cars an hour. That's a long way from loading a box car when I first started in the grain business.

China tariffs were a blow to all of us, changing the flow of soybeans going to the West coast to every other direction. Many grain elevators and grain companies were greatly affected by the trade disputes. We took one for the team and I am expecting the basis levels to not go back to previous year's levels unless we have a widespread crop problem somewhere in the world. U.S. demand for corn continues to stay firm and I expect that growth to continue

DANNY PINSKE

Pro-Ag Manager
Hoffman Grain Elevator



**PHOTOS SUBMITTED
BY DANNY PINSKE.**



more so than for soybeans.

It will be a hard ride for us and our producers and good crop yields continue to be needed. Sensible agronomy assistance, like that offered by Pro Ag, will be key along with good weather. In the coming months, there will be marketing opportunities as successful people look ahead and get pricing done early. Open orders have worked well. Just give us a price you are looking for and we put in a futures market price to work for you 24/7.

Your money is in the bin, so monitor grain stored in farm bins as some was put in on the wet side. Discounts can be

severe for grain in poor condition. We have noticed more fines in corn than usual from certain areas either from weather or equipment not operating properly. Since we have corn that goes for human consumption, extra fines can create problems in meeting those higher quality specifications. We always look for new farm product markets and a good supplier reputation benefits you.

Thanks for your support. We are excited for the grain department future as our new facility is scheduled to be operational by next harvest. We are here to help and support you with your grain marketing needs.

WINNING YIELD IN THE FIELD



**JIM
HLATKY**

Agronomy Manager
Parkers Prairie - Main Office

I write this article after watching the Superbowl and whether you're a Patriots fan or not, you have to admire their ability to find a way to win.

Farming requires many of the same skills to be successful. Starting out a new crop year, it's necessary to take an unbiased look at what has and hasn't been working and how to adjust to the current situation. I think it's a good time to review last year's tape on how the crop year went – what scored big, and if there was a fumble, where was it?

On the input side, we're like an offense trying to score points, or in agriculture – driving yield. We soil sample, grid and zone, then develop a fertility plan based on the field – always mindful of how to get from here to there. We have to watch out for the unexpected blitz, such as waterhemp showing up for the first time, or weeds resistant to chemical plays that have worked in the past – like ragweed, not to mention soybean cyst nematode, white mold, corn borer or Goss's Wilt, just to name a few.

What do successful football coaches and farmers have in common? Scouting! Searching for every piece of good information they can to make better decisions. Just like a grizzled championship veteran, your local agronomist will never be replaced by an on-line algorithm or one-size-fits-most recommendation. Plus, things happen

fast whether on the football or crop field, like a thistle caterpillar or Armyworm outbreak. Do you have a plan to spray yourself? How many acres can you scout and spray each day? Is it time to call ProAg for "special teams" help?

Let's assume we have a Plan A and B for every scenario. Then, you have to rely on a good defense. Don't give up yards or yields gained by not having a marketing plan. Every year I watch growers cut costs amounting to maybe \$35/acre – often crossing a line that hurts yields – only to lose over \$100 per acre because they fail to stay abreast of the markets. Now is the time to attend a marketing class and make a plan.

At ProAg, we want you to win on both sides of the field, because our only reason for being here is to serve you. Planning for 2019? Here's a head up:

1. Soybeans Cyst nematode: Check for this yield-robbing pest this year as new populations were seen last year where they had previously never been. Plant a soybean with cyst resistance and if you have high counts, consider applying a nematicide as well.

2. Make sure your chemical plan has 3 modes of action and targets the

escaped weeds in your fields last year. Ask about crossover, since your chemical of choice may contain 3 products with only 1 doing the heavy lifting. Spray and kill weeds early – don't waste input dollars feeding them and try to beat rain and wind, by using a pre-emerge product.

3. Split apply your nitrogen! Usually the urea prices come down from pre-plant and since it drives yields, it's one of the few win-wins in raising corn. Get enough N down early to get well into top-dress and use a coating to slow leaching or volatility or a product like Super U that does both. If the crop changes color or take off after a top-dress application, you likely waited too long since the crop should never have to hunt for N!

4. Get updated soil fertility info. It's better to take a single sample than not sample at all and even better to get detailed grids. We've had some very good yield the last 3 years and soil fertility levels have been dropping. Don't drop the ball on feeding the crop!

5. Lastly, think about any near misses on the farm or safety hazards from last year as now is the time to fix those hazards. We want to see you safe as we help you put together a winning game plan for 2019 and beyond.

Thank you for supporting our locally owned business!

MARCH 11TH - 22ND 2019

2019 SPRING FILTER SALE

ALEXANDRIA COUNTRY STORE

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

CLARISSA FEED & FERTILIZER

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

GARFIELD FEED PLANT

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

PARKERS FERTILIZER/ELEVATOR

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

BRANDON ELEVATOR

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

BROWERVILLE

501 Railroad Avenue
Browerville, MN 56438
Phone: 320.594.2415

HENNING AG & LP PLANT

313 Inman Street
Henning, MN 56551
Phone: 888.749.0192

PARKERS PRAIRIE MAIN OFFICE

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

BRANDON FERTILIZER PLANT

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

EAGLE BEND FARM STORE & ELEVATOR

325 North Street E
Eagle Bend, MN 56446
Phone: 800.289.7081
Fax: 218.738.2553

HOFFMAN GRAIN & FEED

109 1st Street S
P.O. Box 305
Hoffman, MN 56339
Phone: 320.986.2007

URBANK FEED /HARDWARE/GROCERY

13 Central Avenue S
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
Phone: 218.267.2401



**UP TO
20% OFF!**

**CAN BE ORDERED AT ALL PRO-AG LOCATIONS
OIL IS ALSO ON SALE!**



FILTER STOCKING LOCATIONS

URBANK PRO-AG

13 Central Avenue S
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
Phone: 218.267.2401

BROWERVILLE

501 Railroad Avenue
Browerville, MN 56438
Phone: 320.594.2415



PARKERS PRAIRIE MAIN OFFICE

601 East Soo Street, Suite A

Parkers Prairie, MN 56361



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PRO-AG FARMERS COOPERATIVE

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2019
PARKERS PRAIRIE EVENT CENTER

Pro-Ag Farmers Cooperative will hold
its annual meeting Thursday, March 21, 2019
at the Parkers Prairie Event Center.

Dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Our meeting starts at 1 p.m. to read reports,
elect five directors, vote and transact any
business that may come before the meeting.

DOOR PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN

