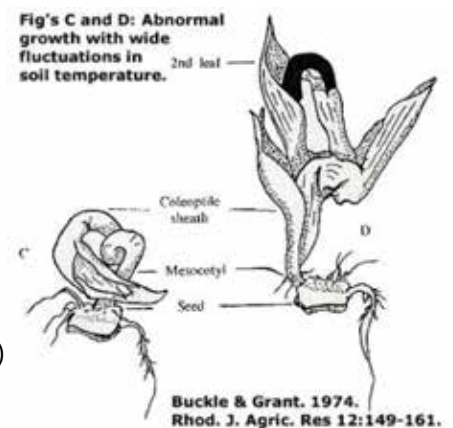


AGRONOMY NEWS *from MARK HONSEY*

Tips for spring planting — soil temp...planting depth...seed bed preparation

Mistakes made during the planting operation are usually irreversible and can put a ceiling on the crop's yield potential before the plants even emerge. Jon Zuk, region agronomist for Winfield Solutions, LLC, recommends the following proven practices to help get your crop off to a good start in southeastern Minnesota.

- Watch the soil temperature and moisture closer than the calendar.
- Reduce secondary tillage operations. Shallow compaction created by excessive tillage can reduce crop yields.
- Avoid early planting on poorly drained soils or those prone to ponding. Yield reductions resulting from "mudding the seed in" may be much greater than those resulting from a slight planting delay.
- In April and early May, when the soil is usually moist and dries slowly, seed should be planted no deeper than 1.5 inches except on sands or if the soil is fluffy or dry. In those instances a 2.0" depth is recommended.
- As the season progresses and soils dry faster, deeper planting may be advisable. When soils are warm and dry, corn may be seeded more deeply up to 2 inches on non-crusting soils.
- The greatest risk associated with shallower planting is the possibility of poor development of the permanent (or secondary) root system if the crown is at or near the soil surface; some of the permanent roots may not grow under hot, dry conditions (resulting in the "rootless" or "floppy" corn syndromes). This condition is often noted at planting depths of 1.25 inches or less. (Fig. C and D)
- Another potential risk from planting less than 1.5 inches is shoot uptake of soil-applied herbicides.
- Plant population at emergence is a good indicator of potential yield. Tips to improve plant spacing — and potential yield:
 - + **Maintain planters.** Replace worn disc openers and fix seed singulation parts.
 - + **Plant at consistent depths.** Monitor the planting depth frequently and strive for depth consistency. Adjust for varying soil conditions.
 - + **Speed kills.** Planter speeds of 4 mph are optimum. More planter errors and more variability in seeding depth occur at 6 to 7 mph.
 - + **Residue is a problem.** Rows with heavier residue emerge slower due to cooler soil temperatures. Residue often results in poorer seed-to-soil contact.
 - + **Watch changes in seed size.** Vacuum planters need to be adjusted when changing seed sizes.



Contact your FCE agronomist for help with seed variety, placement and population. Make sure your maps are up to date and your spring needs are scheduled.



If you know of sensitive areas near farm fields, like bee hives, organic gardens, or organic farms please call your closest Farmers Co-op agronomy office with the precise location. We would also like to be notified when events are scheduled near farm fields. We will do our best to avoid application when a funeral or festival is being held next to a field.



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The Farmers Co-op Advantage is published bi-monthly by Farmers Co-op Elevator Company, your member-owned local co-op — serving farmers, rural households, gardeners and animal lovers in southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa and southeastern Wisconsin.

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MANAGEMENT REPORT

BOARD ACTION

The FCE board of directors recently updated your cooperative's mission statement to "Our mission is to service and enhance the profitability of our producers." We worked on values and vision of what it takes for your cooperative elevator to be successful. Much of this boils down to people. The interaction of patron owners with the employees of your cooperative is extremely important. Employees need to earn your loyalty and trust. We depend on you for a paycheck. Yet this is your cooperative, and we need your support to be successful. I started my column with this mission statement to thank you for your support and in appreciation of the operations you have built since 1903.

PRECISION AG

Precision Ag has been tossed around for some time, yet in our area, I see limited participation in intensely managing crop acres.

Let's look at dairy herd management. We have some of the best dairy operations in the world in our area. Many of you milk cows or have done so in your life. At least in our area, we all know how a cow is milked.

For the dairy industry, I believe DHIA was one of the marvels of the dairy production industry. DHIA records gave dairy farmers a record of what each individual cow was producing and if she was making money. I was talking to Bruce Dokkebakken, general manager of the MNDHIA, and he reminded me in past years, they published in the local papers

individual cows that produced over a 100 pounds of milk per day. Today, we have whole herds producing over 100 pounds of milk per day. A great record keeping system helped dairy farmers improve milk production quickly and efficiently to today's strong production. Cow genetics, feeding, and management will continue to improve to levels much higher and quicker than we ever thought possible.

Just as dairy herd management has used data to improve production and efficiency, data can help you improve your cropping practices.

Precision agriculture is an economic decision. The right seed, lime, fertilizer, chemical and fungicides need to be used on the acres that give you the best return. The dairy farmer today feeds his cows to maximize production if the conditions are there.

If the cow, or the acre, can't utilize the feed or agronomic inputs, it's a waste of money.

Many have spread a uniform rate of fertilizer across a field based on a soil sample. Grid soil sampling along with yield maps provides a more complete picture and tells us what each acre needs and does not need for agronomic inputs. Some high yielding acres are starved as their better yields take more nutrients from the soil. If I feed a cow

based on 50 pounds of production, and she produces 100 pounds of production, she will soon be skinny and producing 50 pounds. Grid soil sampling combined with yield maps can ensure you're feeding each area of your acreage the appropriate amount of nutrients.

I truly believe every crop farmer — alfalfa, silage, or grain production — should be using grid sampling.

Just as dairy herd management has used data to improve production and efficiency, data can help you improve your cropping practices.

by **GORDY ELLIOTT**



Cropping decisions should be based on what each acre of land can produce. In tough economic times, I do not want you to be wasting your money. The dairy industry is a great example of using data to improve profitability, and we can help you do that with crops too. Just ask us.

Before I leave agronomy actions, I again thank you for the prompt payment of your accounts with your cooperative. Prepayments are a necessary requirement with the upcoming agronomy season. Remember, a sale is not a sale until we collect the money for the sale.

GRAIN MARKETS

Grain markets historically rally into the planting and growing season. Even though it is March, traders are already drumming the weather

market drum. Large funds have sold this market and are now pressured to exit positions by buying the market, which we call a short market rally. This will not last forever, so please take advantage of any rallies.

We established the first part of the insurance payout last month. February insurance December corn future price averaged \$3.86 compared to \$4.15 last year. February insurance November soybean futures averaged \$8.86 compared to \$9.17 last year. Greg has a pricing contract that prices December corn at \$4.08. I believe this will be a very good number.

Very weak exports have disappointed the speculating trade. Even barge

freight has been cheaper with the drop in fuel prices and weak demand. The strong U.S. dollar continues to hurt us with slow exports in grain, meats, and dairy products.

Check your grain bins – it's your money – don't let it burn! We have had some reports of spoilage and issues.

FEED MILL CONSTRUCTION

Construction is progressing in Houston with feed load out bins soon to be erected. We face a shortage of bin capacity and need to have feed ready to be loaded when a truck returns to the plant. We will continue to upgrade this feed mill through the summer.

All saleable milk is antibiotic free

Let's be clear . . . every glass of milk, every slice of cheese, and all dairy products for that matter are antibiotic free. It doesn't matter whether it's produced on an organic or conventional dairy farm.

That's because every load of milk delivered to dairy processing plants is tested for the presence of antibiotics. Any load that tests positive for drug residues is discarded. It never enters the food chain.

When it comes to positive tanker loads of milk for antibiotic residues, that number is at an all-time low. Just last year, only 371 loads out of 3,072,702 loads tested positive. That's 0.012 percent. Data for this report comes from the National Milk Drug Residue Database.

To further document declining residue rates, and more importantly the dairy farmer commitment to delivering a safe milk supply, annual data from the National Milk Drug Residue Database can be found in the graph dating back to 1997. Every year depicts either declining or stable numbers.



— From *Hoard's Dairyman*, Corey Geiger, Managing Editor



GRAIN NEWS *from GREG BOLDT*

ENHANCE PROFITABILITY WITH MARKETING TOOLS

Large carryouts are likely to grow. We have 1.8 billion bushels of corn and 460 million bushels of beans that won't get used this year. In a normal production year we add to the carryout. With the combination of large carryouts, a poor export market, and ethanol plants that are cutting back, we could easily see \$2 corn.

Farmers Co-op has many commodity marketing tools that can help you protect the down side. We can help you take advantage of short market rallies. I encourage you to review the graphic to the right and contact me to determine what tools best suit your needs.

CHECK YOUR BINS!

We are seeing some grain going bad. Don't let spoilage steal your profits. Check stored grain regularly for temperature, moisture, insects and molds. Even during cold weather grain should be inspected every three to four weeks. Check for insects by screening them from the grain, examining kernels for damage, looking for webbing, detecting off-odors, or monitoring grain temperatures. During cold weather stored grain insects will congregate at the center and lower portions of the grain mass and may escape detection until extensive heating has developed.

FEED NEWS *from Rod Torgerson*



Spring is upon us. I want to thank everyone for their business and wish everyone a safe planting season this spring.

BOOKING PROGRAM

The Altosid® booking program for the Wind and Rain Fly Control cattle minerals runs through March 31. Creep feeds are also included in the booking program. If you have not signed up yet, contact Paul Bartsh or Mike Root and we will get you covered. Altosid is used for reducing flies for cattle on pastures and ClariFly® products are used to reduce flies in feedlot situations.

Our milk replacers and calf starters will have ClariFly in them starting in April. We can also add either of these products into any custom ration you may need.

SHOW FEEDS

Show feeding season is starting. We wish all the best to everyone who is feeding animals for the upcoming fairs. If you have any questions, we will help you any way in which we can. Contact your dairy nutritionist or calf and heifer specialist for dairy

animals and Paul Bartsh or Alesha Sveen for other show animals. Our website, www.fce.coop, has links to Purina information regarding show animal care and feeding.

DAIRY RATIONS

With low milk prices our nutritionists and calf specialists have been working to keep rations as economical as possible for everyone. We will continue to look for different sources of feeds and supplements or anything new that will help you, our producer, stay profitable.

FEED MILL CONSTRUCTION

Construction in Houston keeps moving ahead. The new loadout tower will be finished the end of March or early April. This will give us another 100 ton of finished feed load out space for our bulk trucks. It will also have a scale hopper under the tower so the trucks do not have to go back and forth off the truck scale to cross weigh every batch of finished feed. When this is done we will have enough load out space to start slowly integrating Rushford's feed into Houston.

The next big phase approved by the

board is the texturized tower. We are finishing plans and

getting our orders in, so that it can be put up this summer. The tower will have finished dry feed above a molasses mixer in bins. The feed will drop into a horizontal molasses mixer and then go into a bulk truck or conveyor to our bagger. The texturized feed will never again be legged or run through a distributor. This will greatly improve the quality of our feed, reduce molasses build up problems, and speed up our operations.

FEED MILL COMPUTER PROGRAM

Implementing the Feed Mill Manager Program has been taking longer than expected, but we are shooting for going live in April. Once it is in place your bills and invoices will look different. If you have any questions or concerns give me a call. We have been working very hard to make this as seamless a transition as possible.

Again thank you for your business!

Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company

Our mission is to service and enhance the profitability of our producers.

GRAIN SERVICES

Set it & Forget it

Fixed Price Contract

Lock it all in at once
quantity, delivery period, and bid.

Most
Popular

Set your Futures

Hope for better Basis

HTA Contract

(Hedge-to-Arrive)

- Establish the delivery period, quantity, and futures price
- Secure the basis later

Set your Basis

Hope for Higher Futures

Basis Contract

- Establish the quantity, delivery period, and basis
- Secure the futures price later

Capture the Market Upside

NEW!

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Participate in the changing grain markets while still being able to receive a payment advance on the value of your contract.

Available Periodically - Call for information

Delayed Price (DP)

Move grain without establishing a price.

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Leave it to the professionals!

A professional group of managers will market your grain for you.



~ On-The-Farm Pickup Services ~

Save Time & Money -- Let us haul it !
We will quote you a 'picked up' price for your grain

Deferred Payment Opportunities

- Sell your grain this year
- Choose to delay payment until next year

Firm Bid Offers

You tell us what price you want, and we will watch the market for you.

Price your grain through Farmers Co-op Elevator and take advantage of carries in the market, call options, and/or put options.

**Check your grain bins - Don't let your grain lose value in your bin!
It's your money!**

Let us help you!
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CREDIT COUNTS

by LEXIE BOEHMKE



This month I am taking on a large task of trying to find patronage check owners who we have lost touch with. If you know someone on the list below, please ask them to give me a call at 800-450-7733 (507-864-7733), or call and give me their contact information. If you know that someone on the list is deceased and you know a family member we can contact, that would also be helpful.

PATRONAGE CHECK OWNERS WE ARE TRYING TO LOCATE

Paul Agrimson	Peterson, MN	Arnold Klug.....	Caledonia, MN	Wayne Pruka.....	Dakota, MN
Charles Anderson	Houston, MN	Ervin Krage.....	Houston, MN	Donald Radtke.....	Dakota, MN
Daniel Anderson	Winona, MN	Walter Kuebler	Brownsville, MN	Orville-Lawrence Rask	Caledonia, MN
Elmer Benson.....	Peterson, MN	Jeff & Donna Kuiper	Utica, MN	John or Tom Reburn	New Albin, IA
Hjalmar Benson.....	Rushford, MN	David Kutina.....	Caledonia, MN	Jeff Rislov.....	Dakota, MN
David Boe.....	Lanesboro, MN	Julie Labonne.....	Peterson, MN	Thomas Rogers.....	Winona, MN
Donn Books.....	LaCrescent, MN	Doris Lampert.....	Caledonia, MN	Eldred Rostvold	Rushford, MN
Kay Brand	Rushford, MN	Tim Lange.....	Caledonia, MN	Don Rudisuhle.....	Caledonia, MN
Ronald Breuer	Rushford, MN	Allen Larson.....	Houston, MN	Kevin Schmitt.....	Canton, MN
Steve Brown	Winona, MN	Jaymour Larson.....	Whalan, MN	Paul Schmitz.....	Houston, MN
Steve Brundige.....	Whalan, MN	Bernard Las	Houston, MN	Robert Schrandt.....	Stewartville, MN
Eugene & Debbie Burt	Rushford, MN	Robert Lawstuen	Rochester, MN	Paul Schulte.....	Houston, MN
Bernett Cady	Winona, MN	David Lee.....	Whalan, MN	Howard Schultz.....	Caledonia, MN
Wm Colsch	Rushford, MN	Ted Lee	Whalan, MN	Kevin Spalding.....	Winona, MN
Allen Cordes	Eitzen, MN	Donald Link	Brownsville, MN	Paul Spande.....	Mabel, MN
Edward Dickey.....	Winona, MN	Winfield Locke Jr.....	Preston, MN	Duane St Mary.....	Caledonia, MN
Steven Doerr	Winona, MN	William or Carol Loesch.....	Lanesboro, MN	Wilfred St Sauver.....	Brownsville, MN
David Erdmann	Rushford, MN	Doug Long.....	Winona, MN	Merle Stoplemoor	Winona, MN
Pauline Espe	Rushford, MN	Ronald & Patricia Lovelace	Rushford, MN	Harry Strusz	Winona, MN
Dick Fisch.....	Caledonia, MN	Kevin Magnison	Stoddard, WI	Ivan Struthers.....	Lanesboro, MN
Carol Fogel.....	Lanesboro, MN	Ronald Martin.....	Sparta, MO	Glenn Sveen.....	Lanesboro, MN
Elmer Forstrom.....	Lanesboro, MN	Josiah McNally.....	Winona, MN	Brian Sweeney	Waukon, IA
Roland Frappier.....	Houston, MN	John Meier.....	Winona, MN	Michael Thesing.....	LaCrescent, MN
Amos Fry.....	Winona, MN	Roger Meier	Traer, IA	Andrew Thiede	Houston, MN
Rick Garner.....	Rushford, MN	Glenn Meiners	Caledonia, MN	Robert Thompson	Lanesboro, MN
Mary Gauerke	Caledonia, MN	Rev. B Meline.....	Wanamingo, MN	John Tibor	Winona, MN
Scott Gilbertson	Rushford, MN	G Bradford Merkl	LaCrescent, MN	William or Carol Timm.....	Winona, MN
Stan Girtler.....	Winona, MN	Gary Meyer.....	Houston, MN	Dr. Tom Tischer	Paducah, KY
Thomas Glomske.....	Peterson, MN	John Mormann.....	LaCrescent, MN	Robert Underhill	Lacrosse, WI
Daniel Gordon	Lanesboro, MN	Alfred Mueller.....	Lewiston, MN	Brent Unnasch.....	Dakota, MN
Howard Gossman	Whalan, MN	Calvin Mueller.....	Rushford, MN	Peter Van Wazer.....	Reno, NV
Marion Gregerson	Peterson, MN	Kenneth Mueller	Winona, MN	James Waletzki	Dakota, MN
Natalie Gunderson	Whalan, MN	Michael Mueller	Preston, MN	Mark Weber	Eitzen, MN
Gordon Hanson.....	Whalan, MN	Warren Mulligan	Winona, MN	Roy Wetzel.....	Winona, MN
Jeanette Hartson	Peterson, MN	Mike Nelson.....	Lewiston, MN	Garnet Wiebke.....	Caledonia, MN
Alvin Haugen.....	Caledonia, MN	Laverne Nelson.....	Altura, MN	Harold Weinbender	Bella Vista, AR
Derek Heald.....	Fountain, MN	Donna Odegard	Houston, MN	Henry Wilson.....	Peterson, MN
Gerhard Hegland.....	Utica, MN	Gerald Oech.....	Winona, MN	Nancy Wood	Winona, MN
Jim Hirman.....	Lanesboro, MN	Robert Oefstedahl	Spring Grove, MN	Richard Wruck.....	Caledonia, MN
Norman Hoff	Mabel, MN	Loren Olness.....	Peterson, MN		
Jon Holger.....	Rushford, MN	Jeff Ostern.....	Caledonia, MN		
Matthew Hongerholt	Whalan, MN	Ellsworth Papenfuss	Winona, MN	Blumentritt Farm	LaCrescent, MN
Darrel Huebner.....	St Charles, MN	Rick Papenfuss.....	LaCrescent, MN	Bueber Farms.....	Rushford, MN
Loretta Husman	LaCrescent, MN	Norman Peter.....	Caledonia, MN	Kennedy Bros.....	St Joseph, MO
Bradford Johnson	Winona, MN	Jim Peterson.....	Rushford, MN	Klug Bros.....	Caledonia, MN
Leonard Johnson.....	Caledonia, MN	Mrs. L Peterson	Rushford, MN	Ransom Family Farm	Waukon, IA
LaVerne Johnson	Rushford, MN	Norman Peterson	Houston, MN	Reburn Farms.....	New Albin, IA
Lynn Kerns.....	Mabel, MN	Orville-Lawrence Peterson.....	Mabel, MN		
David Kiese	Houston, MN	Robert Peterson	Lanesboro, MN		
Frank Kimball	Houston, MN	David Pettersen.....	Winona, MN		
Tim Klinger.....	Rushford, MN	Tom Powell.....	LaCrescent, MN		

Establish a line of credit from your bank or through a finance company like John Deere financing or AgriSpan. Be ready in advance. Take advantage of FCE's 2% cash discount.

As we go into agronomy season, Farmers Co-op Elevator would like to remind you about our credit policy. We are not a finance company. If you want to wait until the end of the season to pay for all of your inputs, then we recommend a line of credit from your bank, John Deere financing, or AgriSpan. We offer special programs through John Deere financing. At this time we still offer the 120 days No Interest or the Prime Plus 1 financing programs.

We also offer a 2% customer discount if your account is current and you pay by the 15th of the following month.

This discount adds up quickly and can be very beneficial to your bottom line.

If your account is 60 days past due, it is placed on COD (cash on delivery) and you must either pay for your future purchases or pay the account current to pick up more product.

During agronomy season when you are busy in the field and need the product, this can be a big inconvenience for you. We also apply an 18% finance charge on past due accounts and that takes away from your profits.

It is in your best interest to have financing lined up. We reserve the

right to place your account on COD at any time. We allow customers to charge with the understanding that our credit policy will be followed. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, and then we have to make a decision on what is best for the company.

If you have questions, please give me a call now. We want what is best for our customers and for Farmers Co-op Elevator. Give us a call and be ready in advance.

For your convenience, FCE's complete credit policy is printed below.

CREDIT POLICY

Farmers Co-op Elevator Co. (FCE) provides goods and services to Rushford, Houston, Caledonia, Spring Grove and surrounding areas. The Board of Directors has adopted the following credit policy, as of March 16, 2009, to protect member equity, manage risk and maintain positive cash flow and to keep a strong balance sheet, while continuing to provide patronage and equity to its supporting members. If you have any questions in regards to accounts receivable, please contact Lexie Boehmke at 507-864-7733 or 800-450-7733.

OUR CREDIT POLICY

- Terms for all sales are cash, check, credit card, or convenience credit.
- To encourage payments at the time of purchase, a 2% cash discount will be allowed, on all products and services that are paid for at the time of purchase or by the 15th of the following month. **THIS APPLIES ONLY IF THE ACCOUNT IS IN CURRENT STATUS.**
- Statements will be sent to all customers who have an unpaid balance at the end of each month. The balance shown is due and payable before or on the last day of the month. If the balance is not paid by the last day of the month, it is considered past due.
- Any balance remaining unpaid on the last day of the month shall be considered delinquent and a finance charge of 1.5% per month (18% per year) will be charged to the account.
- If the balance remains unpaid after 60 days, all future purchases will be placed on COD and will be payable at the time of purchase or delivery until the account is paid current or arrangements have been made with the Accounts Receivable Department in Rushford.
- Any collection or legal fees for accounts over 60 days will be charged to the customers account.

AGRONOMY ACCOUNTS

FCE will not be carrying our agronomy accounts as we have in the past; however our agronomy customers have several options available to them. They are:

- Charge your purchases and pay for them each month as they come due. If the account is paid by the 15th of the following month you will receive a 2% discount. We will not be returning finance charges any longer.
- Credit will be issued when FCE has in hand a bank Letter of Credit or bank approved credit line for sufficient amount to cover ordered products and services for the applicant.
- Prepayment of products/services – payment must be made before products or services are picked up, delivered or applied. Prepayment programs and incentives are offered. Early prepay programs and incentives may vary with the date and are subject to change without prior notice.
- Farm Plan is now offered at the elevator.
- AgriSpan- formally known as Partners in Production- is also offered at the elevator.

DAIRY CUSTOMERS

We are working on implementing an ACH program for our dairy farmers. We will do a withdrawal for payment off of their bank accounts that will coincide with their dairy checks. Customers who are interested in this program will receive a 3% discount.



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Our Mission is to service and enhance the profitability of our producers.



Farmers Co-op Elevator's Horse Owners Workshop

April 5, 2016 | Rushford Legion | 6 pm

Get one-on-one advice for your unique horse. Local Purina experts, Holly Rosner and Alesha Sveen, will be on hand to answer your questions and discuss the latest in nutrition research and issues specific to our region. Everyone who comes will receive a frequent buyer card and the chance to win prizes. Bring a friend and we'll give you a BOGO, too.



**May 14, 2016
Rushford**



FCE Cattle Nutritionist Mike Root Joins Elite Group

Mike Root was part of a select group of salespeople from across the U.S. who recently participated in an intense, four-day Dairy Science 301 training program at the Purina Animal Nutrition Center in Gray Summit, Missouri.

He received in-depth training on calf, heifer and cow health, nutrition and management and was also given behind-the-scenes tours of the Purina Animal Nutrition Dairy Facility. Training included all aspects of dairy herds: full potential calf feeding and management; heifer evaluations, nutrition and management; dairy reproduction; transition cow health; troubleshooting herd problems, blood analysis for nutrition; lameness evaluation; water quality; developing and fine tuning diets; and lactating cow nutrient responses.

Congratulations to Mike for this accomplishment and commitment to the dairy industry. As a graduate of the Dairy Science 301 program, Mike is a valuable resource for dairy producers in FCE's area. Give our dairy nutritionists — Dan Bergin, Mike Stemper and Mike Root — a call if you'd like help evaluating your dairy operation and profitability.

www.fce.coop | [f/townandcountrystore](https://www.facebook.com/townandcountrystore) | 800-450-7733