

Wheat Stand Assessment

Begin scouting wheat fields in April and early May to evaluate winter survival. Look at fields as a whole, and do not focus on poorer sections of the field. Consider the percentage of the field that is questionable. Always look across the field, and not down the rows. Also, measure per ft of row & at multiple locations of the field to quantify % yield potential. It is also important to evaluate the plant root system. Are they at a disadvantage with poor potential? These plants should not be included in your counts. Consider early application of nitrogen to help the crop take off, while also not risking putting it all up front for a crop that may be a replant. IF, in a rare case, the crop does not survive, the nitrogen can be credited to the next crop. Please contact your crop advisor for advisement on wheat stand evaluation and replant decisions.

Important Training Factors to Consider When Preparing for Spring Rush

Every spring we take on the task of training new employees to do tasks in our operations. Sometimes it goes well, sometimes it does not and this can lead to accidents, property damage, injuries and lack of productivity. Training will not happen on its own, so it is best to start with a plan.

- 1) Build a culture of safety in your operation. Teach employees to Stop, Think, & then Act. We should all ask the question, is this the best way, or is there a better or safer way.
- 2) Create an Orientation checklist to review with each new employee, to ensure you cover all important tasks and they understand the tasks. Ideally have the employee sign and keep a copy in their file
- 3) Support different learning styles. Are they a Visual, Audio, or Kinetic (learn to do by doing it) learner (hands on)?
- 4) Teach them to identify hazards and opportunities for improvement. Encourage them to communicate on a regular basis.
- 5) Schedule a refresher to review their understanding and compliance with safe practices. Are they doing it correctly? Do they need more training or coaching? Are they competent at the task? Your role as a supervisor will transition from direct supervision to delegation for each new task an employee learns and become competent at the specific job or task.
- 6) Hold regular meetings. These don't need to be big formal meetings, but can be quick huddles around a tail gate, work bench, etc., talking about the upcoming tasks and the best way to perform them safely and efficiently.
- 7) Know your employees, what are they capable of doing competently, how good at assessing a job or situation are they, how many hours can they work until they become less effective at the job and develop unsafe practices.
- 8) Remember to sharpen the saw. Review your performance as a boss/supervisor. Effectively coaching, supervising and supporting as needed. How effective was your training, and what can we improve for next year.

We all were new to every task we currently do today at one point in our career and had to learn how to do it.

Grants Available in Dufferin County!

Financial assistance through the Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP) is available to qualified landowners to share in the cost of selected projects that improve and protect water quality. Eligible projects include: cover crops, exclusion fencing, machinery crossing improvements, living snow fences and more! To apply and learn more contact the RWQP staff at your local conservation authority. They will help plan your project and complete the application. Updated environmental Farm Plan is required. Check out Ontario Soil and Crops website for upcoming dates:

<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/environmental-farm-plan/>

Grand River Conservation Authority: Phone: 519-621-2763 X 2268; Email: ruralwater@grandriver.ca

https://www.dufferincounty.ca/files/releases/2018-01-08_Grants_Available_to_Ruiral_Landowners_release.pdf

Calendar 2019

It's never too early to start sending in pictures for the 2019 calendar. We are proud to be able to provide a calendar full of grower pictures year after year – all thanks to your great submissions! Please email your photos to nicole@holmesagro.com

Holmes Agro Agronomy Team Continues to Grow

Along with the seasonal and summer students we also have new full time Sales Agronomist at the Stayner location. We are pleased to announce that on March 20th Alan Lockhart joined the Holmes Agro agronomy team in Stayner. Alan brings with him 2 decades of experience in both plant and livestock nutrition, as well as a distinctive accent. Originally from Northern Ireland, Alan holds his international CCA and is working towards attaining his Ontario CCA. His family farm in Northern Ireland produces Wheat, Cabbage, Broccoli, and Turnips. Alan has moved to Alliston with his wife Frances and 3 children.

Sulphur Sources – Tiger XP

TIGER XP® applied in the fall or spring can provide season long sulphur (S) availability to the plant. TIGER XP® S begins conversion soon after application. Bentonite clay along with carbon and humic acid, hold the S85XP pastille together and thoroughly degrades when activated by water. The conversion to plant available sulphate occurs throughout the growing season. The microbial activity that converts S to sulphate begins at approximately 13°C and gradually increases as soil temperature rises into the optimal range of 18 – 32°C. In the season of application, 100% of the S is not converted to sulphate. TIGER XP® provides optimum sulphur availability to the crop throughout the growing season. An alternative S source, ammonium sulfate is water-soluble and does not require oxidation to convert S to plant available SO₄-2. It has a high salt index that can damage seed germination when applied at high rates in furrow.



Holmes Agro Credit Policy

Our credit terms are net 20th day of the following month for eligible charge accounts, as per our credit application and agreement.

- On-Line payments are available at the following financial institutions: RBC Royal Bank, TD Canada Trust, CIBC, Scotiabank, Bank of Montreal and **New!** Meridian Credit Union – Orangeville branch.
- Holmes Agro can assist customers with setting up third party financing to FCC (Farm Credit Canada) and Scotiabank YieldMore Financing – please contact your crop advisor representative for more information

Social Media



Holmes Agro is pleased to announce the continuation of our social media contests for the 2018 growing and harvest seasons! If you enjoy taking photos, and enjoy free swag, this is just the thing for you. We want to see your farming photos throughout 2018! Upload them to social media (Twitter & Facebook) and tag **@HolmesAgro** with **#WatchitGrow18**. We also want to see pictures of how Holmes Agro's



lawn and garden products are helping you achieve that happy and healthy landscape! At the end of the year we will randomly pick the contest winner, and they will win a Holmes Agro prize pack! Be sure to check out Holmes Agro website for updates as well!

CLEANFarms 2018



Welcome back to the jug and seed bag collection program! Holmes Agro is proud to participate in the CleanFarms program as a depot to accept your empty pesticide jugs and seed bags. Just a few guidelines to remember:

Seed/chemical bags – all types of EMPTY pesticide bags as well as paper multi-wall and plastic seed bags can be returned in the clear green plastic bags we have available at our locations.

Seed bulk bags can be returned neatly bundled into rolls of 6.

Chemical jugs – **only clean, triple-rinsed jugs with caps and booklets removed** will be accepted for recycling

Triple rinsing

1. Drain container into tank 30 seconds
2. Fill container with clean water (1/4 or 1/5 full)
3. Shake, swirl vigorously
4. Drain into spray tank 30 seconds
5. Repeat procedure two more times
6. Puncture bottom

Upcoming Events

April 7th – Grower Pesticide Course, Orangeville

***** Please email micheller@holmesagro.com to sign up for our e-newsletter *****