



Holmes Agro-Nomic Newsletter



December 2020

Thank you for helping to make this year a success. Holmes Agro has donated on behalf of our customers to several local foodbanks and the Red Cross to help those less fortunate at this time of the year. We wish all the best to you and yours over the coming holiday season!

Holiday Hours: Open December 24th & 31st from 8AM-12PM

Closed December 25th & 28th & January 1st; Regular office hours will resume January 2, 2021

Winter Grower Meeting – A Virtual Series!

Due to COVID-19 we have decided to hold virtual winter grower meetings this year. Please mark your calendars for February 4th and 11th with details to follow.

Grower Pesticide Course Offerings

We have dates set for the new year for the Grower Pesticide Safety Refresh and Rewrite at the Orangeville and Stayner locations. Please have a look at your existing cards and make plans for renewal. Safety measures for COVID-19 will be enforced at these events. The full course will be offered online with multiple dates currently listed and more dates to become available in the future based on demand. Bookings can be made online at www.opec.ca or by calling 1-800-652-8573. Payments must be made ahead of time as course instructors are no longer accepting payments at the courses. Books are available at our offices for pick up anytime. Effective January 1st, 2021, pesticides that were in Class 4, such as some rodenticide or glyphosate products are now in Class C in Ontario and will require proper certification to purchase. Please make sure you have this in place before the upcoming year.

Refresh and Renew: • February 24th – St. Patrick's Parish Hall, Stayner • March 25th – Orangeville Location

Fertilizer Market Update

The nitrogen market remained soft in the first half of the year, with very little movement in price. Globally, nitrogen production has been robust, easily keeping up with demand. However, in the last two weeks we have experienced a small uptick in price, largely associated with a significant run-up in commodity prices. India recently purchased close to 2 million tons of urea, pushing the market to stronger pricing into the last quarter of the year. Nevertheless, price movement will be limited due to increased production in North America, and a large supply available to the retail chain. Bottom line; market direction appears to be firm at the moment, and if there is continued strength in the commodity markets, nitrogen will likely move in the same direction.

The potash market has experienced little movement in the last year, remaining historically low in comparison to the commodity markets. Often times the potash market uses a price metric which translates into how many bushels of a certain commodity it takes to buy a metric ton of potash. In the last year, this price relationship has been on the low end of the spectrum. We knew this would not last forever, and in the last 3 weeks the potash market has strengthened. Relatively speaking, the increases have been much weaker than the commodity market for corn, wheat and soybeans, but the trending direction is up. It will be hard to say if there will be further increases in the near term.

The phosphate market had also been very low in comparison to recent years. However, this too, has changed in the last 6 weeks. The demand side of the phosphate market has remained largely unchanged in North America but the supply side has been a much different story. In the past we have received phosphates from the United States, Russia and Morocco. This summer, the United States proposed import duties on the Russian and Moroccan product. The US claimed that standards of production and protocols were much less strict in Russia and Morocco, meaning they could produce product cheaper. This lead to cheaper overseas product flowing into the North American market, and limiting domestic ability to produce the product at a profit. The proposed tariffs have deterred Russia and Morocco from sending phosphates this direction, resulting in the product shortage we are experiencing now. The increase in price in phosphates is thus driven by trade and supply issues, rather than demand needs.

How Did We Finish Harvest 2020?

2020 is likely a year that most will be glad to see behind us. We look forward to see life a bit more normal in the future. The fall harvest in 2020 hasn't been easy, but for most has hopefully come as a rewarding season. The month of September allowed for a nice window to get started at what turned out to be an above average soybean crop in most of our territory. The ideal rains and good growing temperatures through late July and into August allowed for many soybeans to push for extra yield potential. As harvest moved into October, the weather became more temperamental making harvest more challenging. As much as this was frustrating for many trying to get the crop off and plant wheat into good conditions, it may have created a marketing opportunity with a very bullish market as we moved into November. The real takeaway from soybeans for 2020 would be the reminder that they can weather some stress early on and how our season can truly influence yield through the flowering and pod fill growth periods.

Corn was another great surprise with the majority hitting black layer by the frost in mid-September that hit most of the province. October gave the corn crop some opportunity to dry down to moistures in the 18-23% range and good grade making for an enjoyable harvest. Yields have been average to above average in many areas. The real influencer on yield is likely looking back to the beginning of July putting the corn through some drought stress in areas while the plant was undergoing cob development, reflecting maximum final yield determination. Looking at the crop this fall, July could be liable for the inconsistency in cob size in a lot of fields this fall.

Overall the 2020 harvest season has hopefully been successful for you with good yields, marketing opportunities, and some uncommonly nice weather through November to set up for 2021.

COVID-19 Policy Update

With the holidays right around the corner, we are continuing to take extra precautions to keep our employees, customers, and all their families safe. At Holmes Agro we are following all the COVID health and safety guidelines of our local health units and the province. We look forward to a time in the future when we can all gather again in a safe and responsible manner. Wishing everyone a safe and healthy holiday season.

Ready When Nature Strikes!

Did you know that Holmes Agro is a supplier of various ice melt products? We are happy to offer the ProMelt product line for any of your ice melt needs. ProMelt products are more effective at lower temperatures. ProMelt products are less corrosive compared to other options and are pet friendly. Having the product coloured helps for ease in application to ensure efficient use. We also offer a pet friendly ice melt product called ProMelt Enhanced!

Stop by any of our locations or check out our website for more information!

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. Payments: Setting up online or telephone banking is simple. Select Holmes Agro as the payee and use your 5-digit account number, which is listed next to your account name on invoices and statements. Holmes Agro bill payments are available at the following financial institutions: Bank of Montreal, CIBC, Meridian Credit Union, National Bank, RBC Royal Bank, Scotiabank and TD Canada Trust.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Upcoming Events

December 1-3th – Forage Focus 2020

January 5th – 12th – Grey Bruce Farmers Week

January 6th – 7th – Ontario Agricultural Conference www.southwestagconference.ca

January 18th – Grain Farmers of Ontario District 11 Meeting

February 4th and 11th – Holmes Agro Grower Meetings

February 10th – Dufferin Soil and Crop Annual General Meeting

*All events listed are virtual

***** **Check the website holmesagro.com for general information and upcoming important dates** *****

