

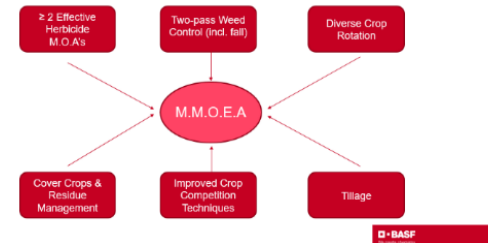


Holmes Agro will be closed Monday February 17th for Family Day

Defining Multiple Modes of Action in 2020

Did you know that on average, there are 40 500 000 weeds seeds in an acre of land and 405 000 of those seeds (about 1%) germinate every year ? The chart below outlines the importance of taking wholistic approach to managing weed resistance, which involves many other facets then chemical control. Often overlooked is crop rotation as a tool for managing weed resistance. With different crops, comes different chemistries, but also different levels of natural competition between the crop and the invasive weed species. Tillage is often overrated in terms of weed control but is still an important part of a successful program. Things like interrow cultivation can not only aid in weed control but also improve soil structure in crop which in turn can improve water filtration and drainage. Cover crops are a further means of supressing weeds as well creating competition, and in some cases serves as a deterrent for certain weed species. The last 2 things in the cycle pertain to chemistry and involve using a minimum of 2 effective modes of action, and also using a multiple pass system rather then relying on 1 pass. If we are applying 2 different chemistries to control weeds but suspect that certain species are resistant to one of those chemistries, then we no longer have 2 effective modes of action. Two pass systems can include both pre-emergent and post emergent applications as well as pre-harvest or post harvest applications. With any chemistry it is important to know what resistance group(s) the product(s) belong to. Group II resistance has been quite prevalent for years with species like pigweed, ragweed, and lambsquarter. Group 9 is glyphosate resistance which is all the rage now with both Canada Fleabane and Waterhemp becoming a concern. It is important to understand the products you are applying, as well as the weeds you are trying to control, and how your actions may impact current and/or future weed resistance issues.

What Multiple Modes of Effective Action Involves



Five Mistakes of Marketing

Ed Usset is a professor of grain marketing economics at the University of Minnesota. He spoke at the southwest agricultural conference this winter and listed and described the 5 common mistakes farmers make when marketing their grain. Usset's main take away when it comes to grain marketing is to eliminate mistakes.

1. Reluctance towards pre-harvest pricing
 - Between 2000 -2019 Corn futures market from May to October has decreased 75% of the time (15 years futures price declined, 5 years futures price increased)
2. Failure to understand and track your Basis
 - Basis = Cash price – Future price
 - Basis spreads in the spring and narrows in the fall
 - Very common tendency of the corn market price to be higher in the spring than it is in the fall
3. Lack of an exit strategy
4. Holding Grain in storage for too long
 - A realistic goal to have would be to not hold unpriced corn or soybeans in the bin beyond July 1
5. Thinking you avoid storage costs when you sell grain and buy a call
 - Because market carrying charges reflect a market demand, you cannot avoid storage costs by selling nearby and buying deferred future contracts when carrying charges are positive

Precision Ag – Yield Maps

Further into our discussion of precision ag from our January newsletter comes the capabilities of yield maps. Yield maps in general are good indicators of performance in different areas of your farms, but the real capabilities are in multiple yield maps over different growing season and the ability to average them and eliminate some of the minor inconsistencies. This is very important since using a single year yield map can result in selection of anomalies from an individual season. With most combines there are other valuable pieces of data behind the single layer of yield, like topography/elevation and ground speed among many others. For example, overlaying elevation along side a yield map can be quite powerful as it can show changes in soil types or depths throughout the farm. Once we have an idea of the zones we need to manage differently, we can integrate better soil sampling to narrow in on how to segregate our farms. Ultimately, we can help fine tune our practices to help improve areas falling behind and monitor inputs in areas that don't have the potential to provide more to our best areas to become even more productive.

Help Wanted!

We continue to invest to better serve our customers. At time of writing we are finishing installation of the new bagger bin at our Orangeville location. The new stainless steel bin will allow us to continue to deliver quality bagged fertilizer in a timely manner. We have completed testing the system and will be ready to commence bagging by the first of February. We have also installed two new 40,000 gallon stainless steel storage tanks in our tank farm to improve capacity on hand.

Holmes Agro has filled a number of our summer jobs, but we still looking for DZ/AZ drivers, as well production workers for Orangeville to bag and tote fertilizer. If you or someone you know is interested in working with Holmes Agro, please contact Archie Wilson at 519-941-0450 or e-mail at archie@holmesagro.com

Orangeville Grower Meeting

Soybean Management (Horst Bohner)

- Soybean yields in Central Ontario have been steadily increasing over the last decade, but appear to be reaching a plateau. What can we do to continue to increase yields, and best manage our soybean crops in 2020? Research done by the Ontario Ministry of Food and Agriculture has identified a few aspects of production that will help soybean producers continue to be successful and profitable going forward.
- Fertility- While soybeans respond well to fertilizer, especially potassium, research has shown that they will produce the best in soils that have a high base fertility level. This can provide a benefit to producers who focus on building soil levels instead of just replacing what the crop took out.
- Disease Resistance- As soybeans become more prevalent in Ontario rotations, diseases like Soybean Cyst Nematode, white mould, and phytophthora root rot are becoming more common. Remember to select varieties with good disease resistance packages, especially if these diseases are issues that you have had in the past.
- Weed Pressures- The issue of weed control is becoming much more complicated in Ontario soybean production. As herbicide resistant weeds continue to spread, the use of pre-emerge herbicides with residual activity is fast becoming the best strategy to keep weeds out of your soybean fields. It is also important to mix multiple modes of action into every spray application to prevent further resistance from occurring.

Crop Protection Update (Mike Cowbrough)

- The landscape of weeds in Ontario is constantly changing, as new species make their way into our area, and continue to develop resistances to various herbicide groups. Mike Cowbrough, extension weed specialist with OMAFRA, recently took the opportunity to warn farmers in Holmes Agro's area about the dangers of 2 resistant weeds that are beginning to appear in Simcoe and Dufferin County fields, Waterhemp, and Canada Fleabane. With both of these weeds resistant to glyphosate, as well as most group 2 herbicides (waterhemp can also be resistant to group 5 and 14 herbicides), managing your chemical program is an important step in controlling the spread of these weeds.
- It is key to include multiple modes of action in every spray pass, as well as using pre-emerge residual herbicides, especially in broadleaf crops like soybeans. Other non-chemical controls, such as strategic tillage, and cleaning equipment between fields can also go a long way towards controlling the spread of these yield robbing weeds.
- Talk to your Holmes Agro rep about how to best control herbicide resistant weeds in your system!

Precision Agriculture – How do we keep it simple (Taylor Holmes & Will Kell)

- When looking to get started with Precision Ag it is important to keep basic agronomy in mind. It all starts with the soil, and variability is inevitable. Site specific soil sampling whether Grid or Zone can be an important starting point. Keep in mind with newer GPS equipped machinery we are collecting multiple layers of data on every pass (topography/elevation, yield, moisture, application rates, etc.). This information along with other sources of GPS information such as Satellite imagery can be used to drive variable rate applications. Variable Rate liming, fertilizer applications, seeding rates as well as variety placement can driven by the agronomic information collected. It is rarely about making all the farm yield the same, but rather maximizing return on inputs where the yield potential is the greatest. Quite often we learn as much from what does not work as do from what does work. Every journey starts with a single step, there is endless possibilities to use precision ag in your operation, set reasonable goals to try some in your operation.

Presentation Summary for Agrico (Martin Kiefer)

- It was enlightening to hear from Martin at Agrico about fertilizer sourcing and the freight logistics involved with getting fertilizer to the Agrico terminal. Martin spoke to the fundamentals behind the annual process to source and import fertilizer products. He mentioned several times, that quality is a paramount concern at wholesale, retail and consumer levels and Agrico monitors and manages fertilizer quality throughout the logistics journey. You can imagine the potential quality issues involved with transporting 22,000 mt of a hygroscopic product (affinity to attract moisture) manufactured in a warm climate, put into a sea going vessel for weeks, travelling across the warm ocean waters and then into the cooler fresh water environment and then getting unloaded/reloaded and still remain in pristine conditions. Monitoring, segregation and conditioning all have to be implemented to help mitigate risks of fines and chunks in fertilizer that Holmes Agro customers apply to fields annually. Agrico and Holmes Agro strive to deliver quality!

Upcoming Events

February 12th – Dufferin Feed & Seed Show, Amaranth Municipal Office

February 17th – Family Day.

February 27th – Stayner Grower Meeting