

Reminder Holmes Agro will be closed April 15th, 2022, for Good Friday

Happy Retirement Joanne!

We would like to wish Joanne Gregson a happy and well-deserved retirement!

Joanne joined Holmes Agro Stayner in 2008, bringing a wealth of experience in agricultural administration. She was a valued member of the team, contributing expertise to all facets of the business, from MyFarm, to Pioneer, invoicing, organizing and helping to support many initiatives. Never one to quit, Joanne has retired from Stayner, but is filling a part-time role at the Orangeville location through the 2022 season.



Scouting Update – Winter Wheat Stand Assessments

As we move from the winter months into early spring there are a few factors to consider when assessing winter wheat stands to determine if they are sufficient to keep for the 2022 crop year. A healthy plant stand of at least 7-10 evenly spaced and well rooted plants per foot of row is needed to capture 90- 95% of yield potential. To determine good plant health, dig several plants with as many roots attached as possible. Cut the crown at the base of the plant. If the crown is a white/light green colour the plant is still alive, if the crown is brown the plant is dead. Planting date is also used when assessing plant stands. An early planted field with 7 plants per foot of row can be kept. While a late planted field needs a minimum plant stand of 9-10 plants/foot of row to be kept.

Very rarely is a winter wheat field completely uniform so the percentage of winter kill in the field should be taken into consideration as well. If 30% or more of the wheat crop is affected by winter kill the field should be replanted to another crop. A simple way to scout for total winter kill in a wheat field is for every 100 paces record the number that have no/very poor wheat stands and repeat several times across the field. Then tally the total number of paces with no/very poor stands to know if the field is above or below the 30% threshold.

Other tools we have in the 'agronomic toolbox' to help assess plant stands include the use of satellite imagery. It may be too soon to use imagery this spring to get a bird eyes view, but last fall's imagery can be helpful to show discrepancies in the winter wheat stands that were present before the crop entered dormancy over the winter.

Check with your Holmes Agro agronomist this spring if you have concerns about your winter wheat stands!

Spreader Safety

With the spring rush, hopefully just around the corner, please keep in mind some important points when using fertilizer spreaders.

- ☐ **Complete a circle check** – tires, safety chains, in/out of gear, monitor tightness of drive belts, if you see any issues please contact our local office.
- ☐ We instruct our delivery drivers to **set the spreader** when filling it, but please double check. The density and rate will be on the loadout ticket, use the chart on the spreader to determine the spread width and gate setting. Double check the High/Low speed is on the correct sprockets.
- ☐ **Cleanliness** – Ensure that spinner blades and flow divider are clean and not damaged.
- ☐ Run at optimum tractor **PTO speed** (most tractors should be run around 2200 RPM), at a 40 or 50-foot interval, depending on the spreader. Avoid turning sharply as damage to the PTO shaft may occur.
- ☐ Slow your ground speed as rates increase, for optimal pattern.
- ☐ Ensure that while parked, the jack is secure.
- ☐ Do not exceed 30 mph when towing a spreader on the road, and make sure that the spreader is out of gear.
- ☐ Loads should not exceed 0.5 mt when being towed behind a ½ tonne pickup truck.
- ☐ Loads should not exceed 2 mt when being towed behind a ¾ tonne or larger pickup truck.

Spreaders are always in high demand in the growing season, please contact Holmes Agro as soon as you are finished with your spreader - your neighbour may be waiting for it!

4 R Nutrients Part 2 – Right Rate

The right 'rate' is the second principle of nutrient management of 4R nutrient stewardship. The right rate of nutrients applied centers around accurately assessing and making decisions based on the nutrients supplied by the soil and demanded by the plant. When considering the amount of nutrients needed throughout the growing season, a realistic and meaningful yield target is an important first step to determining the overall nutritional needs of the crop. Apply credits for nutrients already supplied through the soil, crop residues, manure applications, ... is equally important when determining the right rate of fertilizer needed. The use of routine soil sampling is helpful to estimate soil nutrient levels and check that the soil is not being depleted over time. Variability in the field is another consideration, be aware of the inconsistencies in soil type and texture and adjust the yield goal to be realistic of the soil/field conditions.

The 4R nutrient stewardship pocket guide can be a great resource when making nutrient management decisions!
<https://nutrientstewardship.org/4r-pocket-guide/>



Getting The Most Out of Your Forages

Spring is an excellent time to fertilize hay fields and pasture with nitrogen to promote growth. A fertility program will not only increase yields but also increase feed quality and protein in your forages. Legumes produce their own nitrogen so a forage stand of 60% or more legume (alfalfa) generally doesn't need additional N. P and K should be applied to cover removal rate or by soil test levels. Since the N from MAP is the most economical source of N, it never hurts to apply MAP as your source of phosphorous applying a small amount of N even in a legume stand. Since nitrogen is very water-soluble nutrient, it can move quite easily in the soil so N losses can be high in sandy soils or after heavy or extended rainfall. Therefore, it's always best to apply smaller quantities more frequently as the forage crop is growing. A pure or high % grass stand or pasture requires 40-60 lbs of actual N in the spring and after each cut. Consider sulphur (S) requirements by including either an elemental or sulphate S source to avoid S deficiency and increase % CP. Rule of thumb 1 lb of S for every 7 lbs of N. These rates can be reduced if manure was applied. Never apply manure or fertilizer on frozen ground and since nitrogen is so volatile, consider treating urea with a urease inhibitor to delay volatilization losses. Products such as ESN will allow the N to become available over a longer period of time and is ideal for pasture promoting growth over a longer period of time with fewer applications.

Next Level Ag Series & #Watchitgrow

Make sure to check out Holmes Agro's YouTube channel if you were unable to attend our 2nd annual Next Level Ag Series I & II that was held on March 3rd. See the links to all of the great presentations below.

Next Level Ag Series I – Featuring Dr. Jason Deveau from OMAFRA, Josh Linville from StoneX, and Graham Burton from Premier Equipment: <https://youtu.be/DwFri34BNQ0>

Next Level Ag Series II – Featuring Aaron Stevanus from Mosaic, Craig Klemmer from FCC and Dr. Peter Sikkema from University of Guelph: <https://youtu.be/IByygKL69AE>



MyFarm Mobile App



Did you know you can access your MyFarm crop records, agronomic recommendations, field maps, and scouting reports on the MyFarm mobile app?

MyFarm subscribers have access to their account through the web based mobile app. The system is available on IOS, Android, and Windows at m.holmesagro.com. All of the cropping recommendations made in the MyFarm system are accessible and editable in the mobile version. Currently we are offering seeding, crop protection, fertilizer application, field scouting, and harvest modules. All of the recommendations can be viewed, changed, and date stamped to provide better field records and an increased level of traceability.

We see the MyFarm system continuing to be an important part of successful and sustainable crop production moving forward and are continuing to invest in this platform. Speak with your agronomist regarding getting set up on the MyFarm system with access to the mobile version.

Credit Update

Our new email address for customer service is: receivables@holmesagro.com. Please add this account to your safe senders list. New payment option by **Interac E-Transfer** is now available. Include your account number in the Message to: receivables@holmesagro.com