

WEST-CON Update

WINTER 2015



AG TECHNOLOGY

**NDVI imagery. What is it?
And how can we utilize it?**

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West-Con

PLOT RESULTS

Perfect Conditions

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IH Collector

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Planning *for the Future*

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Mother Nature treated us well this year. Not only did we have big bushels per acre, we also had a crop with outstanding quality.

Our grain department had an excellent fall. Our largest dumping day was just over 728,000 bushels. There was also a lot of grain put in storage on the farm. With the lack of grain sales, trains are easy to obtain and are actually trading under tariff. We do have some freight at tariff, which will affect our margins, but it is an issue that we will work out of. Last year our freight made us a lot of money. Agriculture is up and down, and we take calculated positions to make sure we can offer quality service to our members.



*Dean Isaacson
General Manager*

Fall fertilizer started out slow. However, we ended the year solid, with volumes slightly higher than we projected. The profitability challenge in agriculture has affected more than producers. In most ag business today, margins are compressed. There are several ways to try to ensure profitability. Buy cheaper, sell for more, cut expenses, and simply remember to make informed business decisions. Concerning these decisions is a diminishing point of return, and it is crucial to know where that is. West-Con has drastically cut expenses. Our grain and agronomy volumes were commendable, but as I said before, margins are compressed. The agricultural environment probably won't change any time soon. We've been through it before and we will get through it again. West-Con is very fortunate and we have made sound investments, some that are essentially paid for. Our balance sheet is remarkable and we do not have any near-future investments necessary. With our present facilities, we are set for years to come, of course until the agricultural economy dictates there is a new opportunity. I assure you, my staff and I are up for the challenge.

“Our balance sheet is remarkable and we do not have any near-future investments necessary.”

I would like to thank our West-Con employees for their hard work and dedication and making our fall a complete success.

From all of us at West-Con, we thank you, our valuable members, for you continued support.

Happy Holidays!

Winfield R7 Application

BY JUSTIN GOLDEN AND JIM DOVE

As some of you may know, West-Con agronomists recently got iPad tablets, and some of the things that are included on the tablet are really cool apps, like the R7 tool. What is R7, and what can it do for you? R7 is an app from Winfield, utilizing 20 plus years of satellite imagery taken of most farms across the United States, allowing for more effective and cost efficient input decisions.

NDVI imagery. What is it? And how can we utilize it?

Normalized Difference Vegetation Index is NDVI. It's a mouthful and can sound confusing. This is an index that measures the "greenness" of a plant, based on the observation that different surfaces reflect types of light differently. Imagine a satellite orbiting earth. It takes an NDVI snapshot of an area, and what that camera took as a picture can be broken down into certain areas, including fields. We can draw this area and measure the NDVI image which in turn will break into a spectrum to measure crop health.

R7 offers in-season imagery using the NDVI technology. A lot of this data goes back many years, and is available to use in R7. By seeing these maps you can identify less productive areas in the field before you can see them with the naked eye. Once these areas are identified you can take action to respond faster than you could before, utilizing in-season application of nitrogen, making a fungicide application or maybe altering drainage decisions.

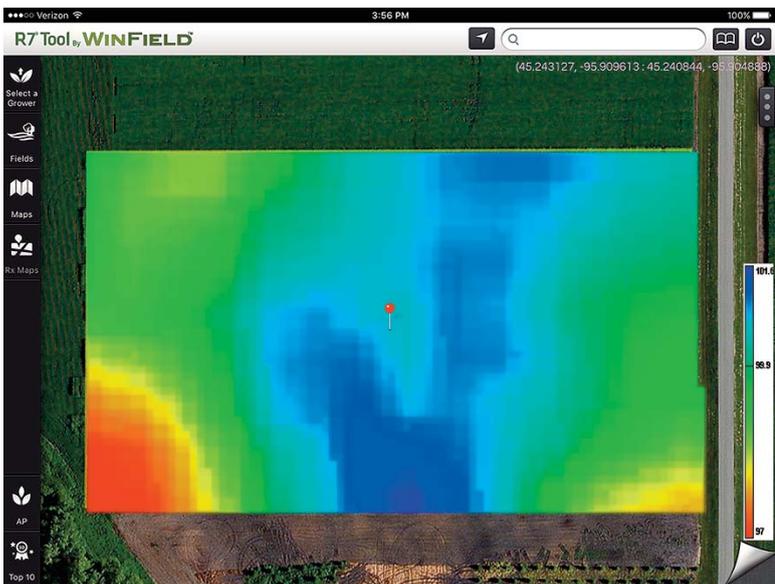


CHT Chart

Top 10 and CHT Charts

R7 can also help determine which hybrids are best suited for your farm. Answer Plots are dispersed across the United States, over many various soils, regions and climates. The R7 tool takes that into account and will give you the best suited hybrids based on hybrid performance across many plots. You can narrow it down to certain plots so you only take the top ten from a 50 mile radius, 100 mile radius, 150 mile radius, etc. To help verify this they also have CHT charts that show various hybrids across a lot of different scenarios, such as soil types, response to population studies (RTP), response to nitrogen applications (RTN), and soon to be added response to fungicide applications (RTF). Each one of these studies is conducted in first year corn, unlimited nitrogen, high population; first year corn, unlimited nitrogen, low population; corn on corn, unlimited nitrogen, high population; corn on corn, unlimited nitrogen, low population; corn on corn, limited nitrogen, high population; corn on corn, limited nitrogen, low population. Studies are conducted on soil types of fine, medium, and coarse, along with a combined treatment.

“R7 can also help determine which hybrids are best suited for your farm.”



Holloway Plot in Season Variability

Ag Technology continued on page 4

AG TECHNOLOGY

continued from page 3

Response to Population (RTP)

This trial is done at every Answer Plot across the United States. Response to population is critical to know because it determines ear flex, drought stress, and what kind of root mass (depending on the genetic family) a hybrid can achieve based on population, which in turn can determine if a hybrid is more subject to lodging at a certain population. As we move into the Western Corn Belt, root mass also plays a huge role because of lack of water and nutrient uptake. Having a fibrous root system or a tap root system can make all the difference in yield. If a hybrid is a flex ear hybrid, then when you lower the population the hybrid will respond by having larger ears in either length or diameter; if it is both it is sometimes called a semi-flex ear. A hybrid that does not have much ear flex is referred to as a fixed ear, which means you can plant it at many different populations but will have relatively a consistent ear at any given population. The rating for response to population is 1 to 9, with 9 being more aggressively yielding at higher planting populations, which would indicate a fixed ear type hybrid. A score of 1 would indicate a hybrid that can sustain acceptable yields with a lower population, in which a plant will yield a larger ear because of less competition for nutrients, water and sunlight. This would be considered a flex ear hybrid.

Response to Nitrogen (RTN)

Response to nitrogen is an easy way to determine if you will see a good return on investment if you make an in-season application of nitrogen. The scale for response to nitrogen is 1-9. Generally a score of 7 to 9 will indicate a very nice yield response from an in season application, a score of 4 to 6 usually indicated that the hybrid has the ability to have a good yield response, but it will not be as good as some hybrids. A score of 1 to 3 indicates a hybrid that will not respond very well and will not see an acceptable yield response, even in limited nitrogen situations. Above all though, we do have to maintain the basic agronomic sense of having enough nitrogen in place at the start of the season whether we do split applications or put everything on up front depending on hybrid and your farming techniques. If we have heavy rainfall throughout the spring, we have to make the conclusion that some of our nitrogen has leached or denitrified and a rescue in-season application of nitrogen should be implemented.



Fixed Ear Hybrid



RTP/RTN/RTCC/RTF

CORN

Midwest Labs, The Fertilizer Institute, Phosphate and Potash Institute, www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/landpubs/nhapp1a.html and other sources.
Actual uptake may vary by 30%.

Boron (B)	0.166	0.333
Copper (Cu)	0.106	0.213
Iron (Fe)	1.0	2.0
Manganese (Mn)	1.49	2.98
Zinc (Zn)	0.425	0.85

RESPONSE TO NITROGEN

CROPLAN® seed's proprietary response to nitrogen (RTN) ratings range from 1 to 9. A high RTN score (7 to 9) identifies a hybrid that has an increased chance of return on investment from additional nitrogen (N) inputs or managing N for later release or in-season N applications. A medium RTN score (4 to 6) defines a hybrid as able to achieve high yields at moderate to higher N levels, yet still maintain yield in situations where N may be less than optimal. A low RTN score (1 to 3) indicates a hybrid with an acceptable yield potential even in situations where N may be limited. The charts below show how hybrids perform differently under different nitrogen management levels.

90 RM		95 RM		100 RM		105 RM	
Hybrid	RTN Score	Hybrid	RTN Score	Hybrid	RTN Score	Hybrid	RTN Score
2845SS	8	3733VT2P	5	4975VT3P	7	5412SS	8
3055VT2P	4	3499VT2P	4	5146SS	2	5415SS	7
3390VT3P	7	3699VT2P	7	4819AS3000GT	8	5369SS	5

RESPONSE TO NITROGEN/RESPONSE TO POPULATION RELATIONSHIPS: CHT-095

The relationship between RTN and RTP scores plays an important role in hybrid performance. This chart shows the correlation between hybrids that require incremental nitrogen when plant density is increased and hybrids where moderate to low yield response to nitrogen is observed with increased population.

Source: 2014 Answer Plot® trial data.



CROPLAN by WinFIELD

"Ag Technology" continued on page 5

Response to Fungicide (RTF)

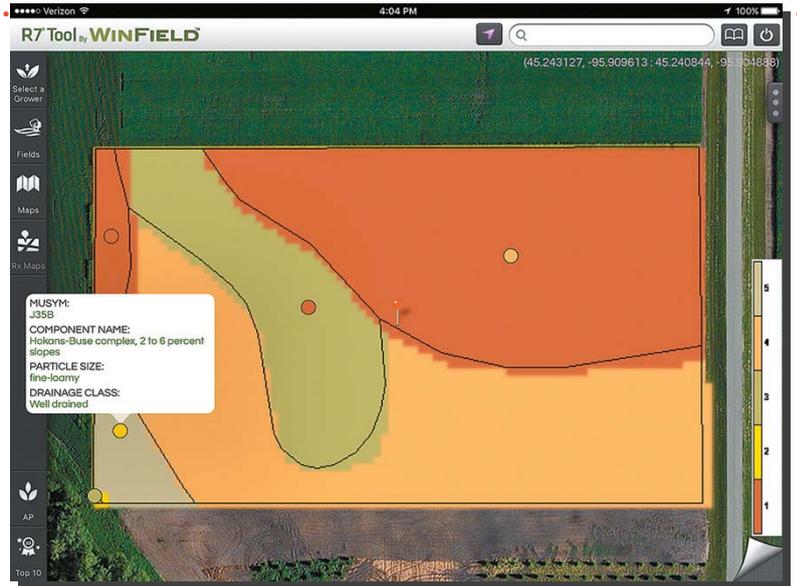
Response to fungicide is a new study that was conducted this year and will be added into the results hopefully by the time this newsletter comes out. What we are doing here is making a fungicide application in-season to see if we achieve a yield response. They have checks for every hybrid at every location the test was conducted and will be based on a rating of 1 to 9, with the response being yield retained by fungicide application versus the check.

Soil Types

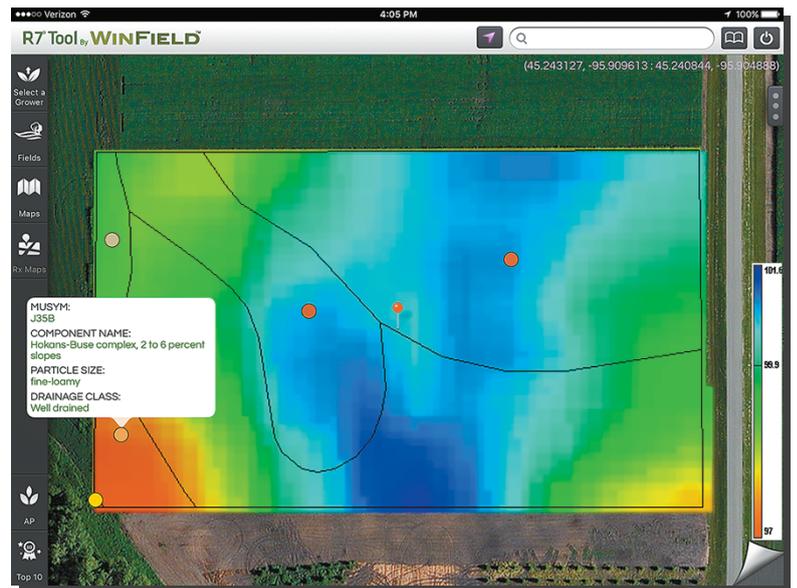
We can also bring up the soil variability map on R7, which is important to know because we can select hybrids based on the performance of each on different soil types. We can view the traditional soil map as well as the satellite derived soil variability map. Identifying the percent of sand, silt and clay type soils in the field will give us the information that we need to look at the soil triangle and find the most predominant soil in the field.

In conclusion, we urge everyone to use all the available resources you can to maximize your yield potential, and keep it economical. Simple tools like this can help us get not only the most out of every hybrid, but also the most out of our inputs that we are putting into the crops this next year. It is no secret that commodity prices are less than comfortable, but we have to plan for another successful crop either way, and that success starts at West-Con and ends with the bushels in your bin (a whole lot of bushels)! We have taken tremendous crops off of our fields these last few years, and it will be very important that we replenish what those have used.

Lastly, on behalf of West-Con, without you we wouldn't be a cooperative, and we thank you for your patronage. Thank you!



Soil Variability



Soil Variability



Monday, March 14, 2016
Western Consolidated
Cooperative
Annual Meeting

Give Something that
Means Something

West-Con will be hosting a blood drive

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

1 – 6 PM at the old office in Holloway

Please call to schedule an appointment

320-394-2171

Kerry ext. 1233 or Cherri ext. 1206

West-Con Update WINTER 2015 **5**

MAKING MARKETING DECISIONS EASIER

BY CHRIS AASLAND

Early November was beautiful, and harvest was completed much earlier than expected with perfect weather and great yielding crops. Mild temps and no rain provided a comfortable harvest pace to get all the work completed. We received a nice two inch rain afterwards which was very welcome. The mild weather also allowed fall field work to be completed and fertilizer applied for next year's crops.

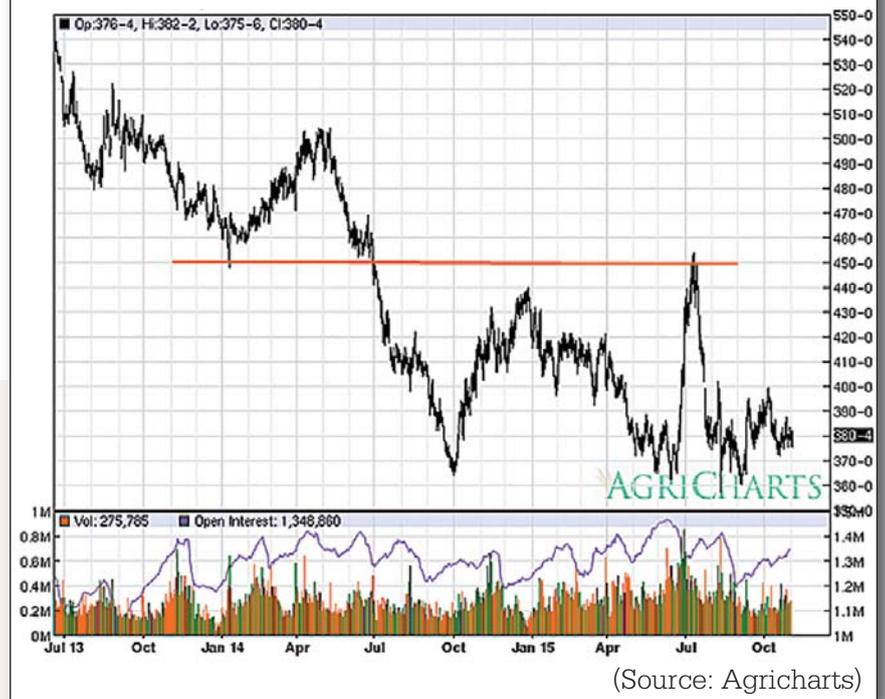
Concerning the markets, corn and soybeans have been trading in defined ranges through much of the fall. Yields have been very good so we shall see in the January crop report how crops fared. Exports have been extremely slow. Hopefully around the first of the year this can pick up providing a demand program for the market to trade against. South America seems to be off to a good start so we will be watching the development of that crop and how it affects the markets. We are still working on a bottoming process in the grain markets and this will need to

complete itself before we can change direction and rally higher. Speaking of rallies, a lot of grain was placed on delayed pricing this fall. Develop a plan to market those bushels first so storage charges don't get out of hand. There is a great explanation of delayed pricing in Paul's article and I encourage you to read it in detail for a full understanding on how delayed pricing works.

I would like to go over an explanation of charting that can be used to help forecast grain price movements. This segment of charting is called back testing. Below is a good example of this in the monthly chart of Dec. corn. Back in July of this year the market rallied higher from the lows of 380 and went all the way up past 450 closing at 454. During this rally there are two points on the chart we can look at to judge how high the markets may go. The first point is the old high put in around Jan. 15 at 440. The market traded past this old high continuing higher.

The next point to look at would be the old low put

ZCZ15 – Corn – Daily OHLC Chart



in around Jan. 14 around 448 to 450. This is the low on the left hand side of the red line I put into the chart. This support line became a resistance line after the market traded down through it during the summer of 2014. Keeping this line in place, it now becomes resistance as the market is now trading below the line instead of above it. During this summer's rally the market traded just above the red line I placed on the chart, but the market doesn't always have to be perfect, just close is good enough. The high on the charts coincided with the July S&D report which was bearish, causing the rally to complete and turn to the downside. It just happened to occur in line with the old low put in back on Jan. 14, which, when we place a line on the chart, gives a good example of the market back testing an area of resistance which was previously supported.

In closing, we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

Delayed Pricing Contracts

BY PAUL MATTSON

I've recently seen articles discussing delayed pricing contracts. These contracts are sometimes called DP, price later, or no price established. No matter what you call them they are typically the same thing. A delayed pricing contract transfers the title over to the

buyer with no price yet established. Once this is done, there is no price protection. The contract has an ending date that is set at the time of the transaction. Be advised that this contract is not covered by any type of bond or insurance. Should a buyer default, the seller is exposed to risk and would be in line with

other creditors for payment. This is why it is so important to have the contract signed. Everyone must be aware of the terms and conditions of the sale.

A delayed pricing contract is not a storage agreement, it is an unpriced cash sale. The charges on this contract are

referred to as service fees. You aren't storing the grain, you are selling it without establishing a price.

Some articles I've read have shed a negative light on delayed pricing. These contracts shouldn't be viewed negatively; they are simply a tool producers may choose to use. Many times delayed pricing contracts are offered cheaper than warehouse



Always thinking ahead

ORGANIZING AND CONTROLLING INVENTORY

BY DARRELL BARTZ

As you're well aware, planning is a very important part of your business. The product we bring in at a given time is based on your planning. Controlling inventory of the products necessary for the upcoming crop season and year is a challenge. We don't want to carry too much inventory year to year because when price changes or new and different products are brought to the market place, we're left with a lot of unused product, and that takes up space. West-Con continues to make investments to assure that we will have the products you need when you need them. Logistical product delays during spring are always a concern. We assure you we are doing our best to supply your needs. We have about 90,000 gallons of bulk chemical storage, giving us a major advantage in the agricultural industry.

West-Con's locations have a combined warehouse space of about 80,000 square feet, and even that isn't

enough through certain parts of the season. At other times of the year inventories are as low as possible and the warehouses are as empty as possible. This warehouse storage space allows us to bring in large quantities of many packaged goods such as soybean seed, seed corn, and many herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and anything else that is beneficial to have on hand. **Early pickup days relieve the warehouse space crunch and get products to your farm timely. Early pickup days will be Thursday, March 24, and Thursday, April 7.** Call ahead to verify products and quantities with your agronomist and set a pickup time. When you get here the order will be staged and ready to be loaded, saving you waiting time.

West-Con has bulk soybean capacities of close to 54,000 units at any one given time, along with the ability to treat any and all soybean seed we sell. Having early seed commitments from you allows us to retain corn and soybean seed that is in high demand.

We will continue to bring product in early and have inventory ready for you when you need it.

Happy holidays from your West-Con Agronomy Department!

**2016 DATES
TO REMEMBER**

JANUARY 11:
Deferred fall fertilizer payments due

JANUARY 20:
2nd seed cash discount
(talk with your agronomist)

MARCH 14:
West-Con Annual Meeting

MARCH 24:
Early seed and chemical pickup

APRIL 7:
Early seed and chemical pickup

AUGUST 24 & 25:
West-Con Ag Days

storage. Elevators offer these cheaper contracts because they provide the buyer with more flexibility. The buyer can choose to ship these bushels or store them in places that are not approved by Commodity Credit Warehouse examiners. Ground piles would be one example of unapproved storage.

The fees charged on a delayed pricing contract can and

do vary. When bin space is in high demand charges will increase, and when there is excess capacity they decrease. Often we hear the term 'free DP'. Like anything else in life, nothing is free. The catch is that the grain must be sold on or before the ending date on the contract. As we stated earlier, there is no downside protection with this contract. Even if you view the price unfavorably on the ending date

the grain must be sold.

The most common negative comment about DP is that the buyer has title to the grain without paying for it. No one could argue that this is a valid concern. You wouldn't sell someone a car without them paying for it. The advantage, again, is that it's often cheaper than warehouse storage. Producers are allowed to separate the timing

of hauling and pricing.

West-Con offers all types of storage and delayed pricing contracts. We have warehouse storage, long-term lease storage, and we offer delayed pricing, as do most grain buyers. Call Holloway 1-800-368-3310 Option 2, then 1; or Twin Brooks 1-800-382-6535 Option 2, to speak to a grain buyer.

Happy Holidays

from **WEST-CON**

Because the goodwill of those we serve is the foundation of our success, it's a real pleasure at this holiday time to say "thank you" as we wish you a full year of happiness and success.



HOLLOWAY FUEL STATION

**Open
24 Hours**

**Save
3¢***

FUEL AVAILABLE

- #1 Clear Diesel (during winter)
- #2 Clear Diesel
- #2 Off-Road Diesel
- Gasoline

3 Easy Ways to Apply!

Find applications at:

- West-Con Office
- Grain Scale
- Forms Tab on our website – www.west-con.com

***Use a West-Con Fuel Card & Receive 3¢ per gallon off each fuel purchase**



TRANSPORTATION

*Greetings from
Transportation!*

BY AARON GADES

As another harvest has ended, I would like to personally thank every patron who utilized our trucking fleet this fall. We enjoyed working with you and hope we can help you again in the upcoming year. As winter gets closer, I want to remind you that we will still do farm pick-up of agricultural products, as well as deliveries to farms and terminals. We will also do pick-ups on the farm to your destination of choice. Whether that is to West-Con, CVEC, Poet, or wherever, we would like to assist you in moving your grain to market. During the winter we watch the weather closely and will not send trucks out during heavy snowfalls, storms, ice or extremely cold temperatures.

I want to remind our local patrons that we do have #1 diesel and blended off road diesel at our fuel station in Holloway. Make sure to come in and blend down your tanks so your equipment will start this winter. Also, stop by the office and apply for a West-Con fuel card to take advantage of the \$.03 discount on all products at the Holloway fuel station.

To book your transportation needs or inquire about rates, please call us at 1-800-368-3310. You can reach me, Aaron, at 1234, or Garb at 1205, or dial 4 for Transportation. As always, please have as much information as possible, including name, phone number, county, township, section, quarter and any other necessary information.

Have a safe holiday season and a happy New Year!



WEST-CON PLOT RESULTS

Perfect Conditions

BY CHUCK NOLTING AND REID MUXFELDT

Fall 2015 will go in the books as a bumper crop throughout the central Minnesota area. Things were no different in the West-Con plot program. Timely rain and good summer heat were the perfect mix to drive yields for all of our locations' test plots. It was also a great year for our Winfield Answer Plot and Crop Production Services Innovative Plot. West-Con's access to these resources is a great benefit to growers and your West-Con agronomists. Having these plots here gives us the opportunity to bring growers in for a personal tour of our 150 acre test plot facility.

**Continued on
page 10**

Chart A			Holloway Corn Yield Plot				
Brand	Hybrid	Traits	Harvest Moist %	Tst Wt. lbs/bu	Bu/Acre @ 15% mst	Yield Rank	Income Rank
Dekalb	44-13	GENSSRIB	18.1	56.6	231.9	6	1
Dekalb	52-84	GENSSRIB	21.7	52.6	245.5	1	2
Dekalb	46-20	GENVT3PRIB	18.1	57.9	229.5	8	3
Dyna-Gro	D32SS56	GENSSRIB	18.2	57.3	228.0	10	4
Dekalb	54-38	GENSSRIB	20.6	55.6	233.7	4	5
Croplan	3899VT2P	GENVT2PRIB	18.5	56.2	225.2	13	6
Croplan	3611SS	GENSSRIB	19.9	56.1	228.7	9	7
Dekalb	53-56	GENSSRIB	21.2	55.1	231.9	7	8
Dekalb	49-72	GENSSRIB	19.6	54.9	225.1	14	9
Dekalb	46-79	GENSSRIB	19.8	56.4	225.7	12	10
Croplan	3499VT3P	GENVT3PRIB	18.4	57.0	220.1	20	11
NK	N31H	AS300GT	17.4	57.5	216.5	26	12
Dekalb	46-36	GENSSRIB	18.5	56.7	219.9	21	13
Dyna-Gro	D34VP52	GENVT3PRIB	18.2	56.0	218.4	23	14
Croplan	4199SS	GENSSRIB	22.8	53.5	234.9	3	15
Dyna-Gro	D31SS31	GENSSRIB	17.0	56.1	213.3	27	16
Croplan	4099SS	GENSSRIB	19.6	55.2	221.8	17	17
Croplan	2845SS	GENSSRIB	17.1	57.4	212.5	29	18
Pioneer	P0157	AMX	22.8	54.4	232.3	5	19
Dyna-Gro	D39SS17	GENSSRIB	20.0	55.6	220.9	19	20
Dyna-Gro	D37SS60	GENSSRIB	20.6	55.8	222.9	16	21
NK	45P	AS3011	21.8	54.4	227.0	11	22
Dekalb	50-82	GENSSRIB	20.0	54.5	219.6	22	23
Pioneer	9538	AMXT	19.5	54.2	216.5	25	24
Croplan	5146SS	GENSSRIB	21.4	54.7	223.0	15	25
Croplan	4276	GENSSRIB	20.0	54.0	217.5	24	26
Dekalb	39-27	GENSSRIB	17.5	56.4	207.4	32	27
Dekalb	53-68	GENSSRIB	26.0	51.8	237.7	2	28
Dekalb	45-65	GENSSRIB	19.5	55.5	212.9	28	29
NK	N45P	AS3011	22.1	53.7	221.1	18	30
NK	N42Z	AS3111	19.1	55.6	208.8	30	31
Croplan	4975	GENVT3PRIB	19.0	55.7	208.0	31	32
Croplan	3337VT2P	GENVT2P-RIB	15.5	57.0	196.2	35	33
Croplan	3699VT3P	GENVT3PRIB	18.4	57.0	204.6	33	34
Croplan	3399SS	GENSSRIB	15.3	57.1	192.6	38	35
Croplan	3146SS	GENSSRIB	16.2	56.9	194.7	37	36
NK	N35T	AS3110	17.6	57.2	194.7	36	37
Pioneer	P9917	AMX	19.8	56.1	200.7	34	38

* \$0.05 per point drying charge *Selling price \$3.40 per bushel

Chart B

Kensington Corn Yield Plot

Brand	Hybrid	Traits	Harvest Moist %	Tst Wt. lbs/bu	Bu/Acre @ 15% mst	Yield Rank	Income Rank
Dekalb	46-20	GENVT3P	18.7	58.3	222.1	1	1
Dekalb	44-13	GENSSRIB	18.9	56.3	221.5	2	2
Croplan	3146	GENSSRIB	15.9	58.1	210.1	9	3
Dekalb	46-36	GENSSRIB	19.0	55.8	217.0	4	4
Dekalb	45-65	GENSSRIB	18.9	56.5	213.0	7	5
Pioneer	P9917	AMXT	19.7	56.7	213.9	6	6
Dekalb	46-79	GENSSRIB	20.9	58.3	217.3	3	7
Croplan	3699	GENVT3PRIB	18.5	57.0	208.7	10	8
Dekalb	49-72	GENSSRIB	20.5	55.2	215.0	5	9
Pioneer	9538	AMXT	18.3	56.0	207.0	15	10
Croplan	3499	GENVT3PRIB	19.9	19.9	211.6	8	11
Dekalb	50-82	GENSSRIB	18.6	56.4	207.1	14	12
Croplan	3611	GENSSRIB	20.2	57.3	208.1	12	13
Croplan	3337	GENVT2PRIB	17.9	57.2	199.7	18	14
Croplan	3899	GENVT2PRIB	20.3	55.1	207.2	13	15
Dekalb	39-27	GENSSRIB	17.8	56.7	198.7	19	16
Croplan	2845	GENSSRIB	17.3	54.3	196.6	22	17
Croplan	3399	GENSSRIB	20.0	55.6	204.8	16	18
NK	N45P	AS3011	21.2	57.1	208.2	11	19
NK	N27P	AS3110	18.7	58.0	198.0	21	20
Mycogen	2A509	GENSSRIB	23.1	56.2	204.3	17	21
NK	N18Q	AS3011	16.8	56.9	184.9	23	22
Mycogen	2V489	GENSSRIB	24.0	51.8	198.3	20	23
NK	N31HT	AS3000GT	17.9	54.6	178.9	24	24
Mycogen	2V357	GENSSRIB	17.9	56.0	177.6	26	25
Mycogen	2J238	GENSSRIB	18.2	56.4	178.0	25	26

* \$0.05 per point drying charge

*Selling price \$3.40 per bushel

Chart C

St. Leo Corn Yield Plot

Brand	Hybrid	Traits	Harvest Moist %	Tst Wt. lbs/bu	Bu/Acre @ 15% mst	Yield Rank	Income Rank
Wensman	W91011	GENSSRIB	15.6	58.5	216.4	2	1
Wensman	W91051	GENSSRIB	16.2	56.8	215.9	3	2
Dekalb	51-19	GENVT3PRIB	16.3	57.8	215.6	4	3
Dekalb	48-12	GENSSRIB	14.0	56.1	211.2	7	4
Dekalb	54-38	GENSSRIB	20.0	55.6	226.2	1	5
Croplan	4822	GENVT2PRIB	15.7	58.0	211.3	6	6
Pioneer	P0157	AMX	16.7	55.1	213.3	5	7
NK	N42Z	AS3111A	14.0	56.8	204.9	9	8
Dekalb	44-13	GENSSRIB	14.1	57.0	202.2	11	9
Dekalb	53-56	GENSSRIB	17.5	56.7	208.6	8	10
Croplan	4199	GENSSRIB	13.8	58.9	200.9	13	11
Croplan	5146	GENSSRIB	13.9	57.5	200.4	15	12
Wensman	W90962	GENSSRIB	13.9	56.7	200.1	16	13
Dekalb	53-68	GENSSRIB	16.2	57.4	202.6	10	14
Croplan	4099	GENSSRIB	15.9	58.3	200.4	14	15
Wensman	W90979	GENSSRIB	14.0	57.2	197.6	18	16
Wensman	W90941	GENSSRIB	14.2	57.0	197.4	19	17
Wensman	W81007	GENVT2PRIB	16.2	56.8	200.9	12	18
Wensman	W9325	GENSSRIB	15.1	56.9	197.3	20	19
Croplan	4276	GENSSRIB	15.2	57.4	197.1	21	20
Wensman	W9288	GENSSRIB	14.5	57.6	196.2	23	21
Dekalb	52-84	GENSSRIB	16.4	56.9	199.9	17	22
Dekalb	46-20	GENVT3PRIB	14.9	57.8	194.1	24	23
NK	N45P	AS3011A	15.2	56.4	193.4	25	24
Pioneer	P9917	AMX	14.9	56.6	191.6	26	25
Wensman	W91073	GENSSRIB	17.2	58.2	197.1	22	26
Dekalb	46-79	GENSSRIB	15.2	57.6	190.4	27	27
Croplan	4975	GENVT3PRIB	15.0	56.8	189.6	28	28
Wensman	W90994	GENSSRIB	14.8	57.5	187.4	30	29
Dekalb	45-65	GENSSRIB	13.9	59.5	185.5	31	30
Dekalb	49-72	GENSSRIB	16.4	56.7	188.7	29	31
Dekalb	50-82	GENSSRIB	14.9	56.1	183.6	32	32
Dekalb	46-36	GENSSRIB	14.9	58.3	180.6	34	33
Dekalb	48-56	GENSSRIB	15.2	58.4	181.0	33	34

* \$0.05 per point drying charge

*Selling price \$3.40 per bushel

West-Con Plot Results *continued*

Here we can observe and discuss seed varieties, Liberty Link varieties, chemical trials, starter fertilizer trials, population studies, and corn root worm studies, just to name a few. If you are interested in taking a personal tour through our facility, get in touch with your agronomist and we will be happy to set a date for you to visit.

In addition to the Winfield Answer Plot and CPS Innovative Plot, we also have our own seed variety trials at all of our locations. Considering the geography that spans each location, we see different hybrids rise to the top of the list. Kensington's winning soybean was a 0.5 maturity. In St. Leo, the standout bean was a 2.0 maturity. The on-average winner in the field was Asgrow 1733, with Croplan's 1750 blend a close second. Both varieties have the ability to stand out as both an offensive and defensive soybean.

The corn plots looked amazing all throughout summer and fall. Croplan 3611VT2P was by far the fastest emerging corn and looked solid all summer long. In Twin Brooks, Croplan 4099 and DeKalb 49-72 were planted side by side and were the clear leaders in the plot all summer. Croplan 3499 also performed very well as we put it to the test. This variety was planted in some tough ground late in spring in very wet soil conditions. It wasn't the plot winner, but after its performance it should be looked at for that tougher acre. That being said, 46-20, 44-13, 49-72 and 52-84 from DeKalb performed to its usual standards, being the best hybrids on most of the farms in the countryside. Seed placement and hybrid selection will be more crucial than ever this fall and winter. We recommend our growers to contact your West-Con agronomist to help make the field by field hybrid selection to best return your dollar to the farm.

Chart D

Twin Brooks Corn Yield Plot

Brand	Hybrid	Traits	Harvest Moist %	Tst Wt. lbs/bu	Bu/Acre @ 15% mst	Yield Rank	Income Rank
Dekalb	44-15	GENVT2PRIB	26.0	53.1	226.6	1	1
Croplan	3611	GENVT2PRIB	24.5	55.9	210.3	3	2
Dekalb	38-03	GENVT2PRIB	20.7	55.5	197.2	7	3
Croplan	3499	GENVT3PRIB	27.2	54.4	219.6	2	4
NK	N31H	AS3000GT	25.0	54.0	207.2	4	5
Dekalb	39-28	GENVT2PRIB	21.5	56.0	193.4	11	6
Croplan	2845	GENVT2PRIB	21.1	56.1	185.3	20	7
Croplan	3337	GENVT2PRIB	23.4	54.5	192.2	12	8
Dekalb	44-13	GENSSRIB	27.4	53.7	205.6	5	9
Dekalb	46-37	GENVT2PRIB	24.7	55.0	195.9	9	10
Croplan	3134	GENVT2PRIB	23.2	54.8	191.0	15	11
Dekalb	43-10	GENVT2PRIB	23.8	53.4	191.2	13	12
Croplan	3899	GENVT2PRIB	28.2	53.7	203.3	6	13
Dekalb	46-79	GENSSRIB	27.6	53.8	196.7	8	14
Dekalb	46-20	GENVT3PRIB	28.1	53.8	195.3	10	15
Dekalb	43-48	GENVT3PRIB	26.2	51.3	186.9	18	16
Dekalb	45-65	GENSSRIB	27.8	53.0	191.2	14	17
NK	N45P	AS3011	29.8	53.0	190.7	16	18
Dekalb	50-84	GENVT2PRIB	28.0	54.7	182.3	21	19
Dekalb	48-56	GENSSRIB	29.4	53.8	185.3	19	20
Croplan	3909	GENVT2PRIB	30.5	52.3	187.2	17	21

* \$0.05 per point drying charge

*Selling price \$3.40 per bushel

At West-Con we recognize the challenges to staying profitable in today's agricultural climate. Because of this, we have devoted more time and resources into putting together a two-day agronomy event to bring our vendors and other agricultural companies to our facility to discuss the hot topics of 2016. Our agronomists have put together larger, replicated trials to help better answer the questions we hear out in the country. In addition to our plots, Winfield and CPS will also have larger stations with more to offer for the grower. We are also lucky to be able to put in one of the biggest cover crop demos in the Midwest. We all know there are more questions than answers when it comes to cover crops, and we hope to be able to answer your questions and guide you through any situation. West-Con will also be opening its doors to a multitude of different vendors and companies to bring the industry to you. We will have key speakers throughout the two-day event. We hope you attend and help us establish a premier agronomy event in the Tristate area.

Chart E

Holloway Soybean Yield Plot

Brand	Variety	Traits	Harvest		Yield Rank
			Moist %	Bu/Acre @ 13% mst	
Asgrow	AG2136	RR2Y	12.4	61.4	1
Croplan	R2C2025	RR2Y	10.6	61.1	2
DynaGro	S19RY65	RR2Y	10.7	59.9	3
Asgrow	AG1935	RR2Y	9.6	59.9	4
Asgrow	AG1636	RR2Y	9.4	59.4	5
Asgrow	AG2035	RR2Y	10.5	59.2	6
NK	S20-T6R2	RR2Y	10.6	58.9	7
DynaGro	S20RY45	RR2Y	11.9	58.7	8
Asgrow	AG0934	RR2Y	9.2	57.8	9
Asgrow	AG1733	RR2Y	9.2	57.3	10
Asgrow	AG1135	RR2Y	9.5	57.0	11
Croplan	R2C2124	RR2Y	10.5	57.0	12
Croplan	R2C2075	RR2Y	13.9	56.7	13
Croplan	R2C1625	RR2Y	10.1	55.8	14
Croplan	R2C1873	RR2Y	11.7	55.7	15
Croplan	R2C2200	RR2Y	11.5	55.5	16
Asgrow	AG1733	RR2Y	9.3	55.4	17
DynaGro	S09RY64	RR2Y	10.6	55.0	18
Asgrow	AG1435	RR2Y	9.4	54.9	19
Croplan	R2C1494	RR2Y	10.0	54.8	20
DynaGro	S14RY95	RR2Y	9.9	54.5	21
Croplan	R2C1994	RR2Y	11.6	53.3	22
Croplan	R2C1400	RR2Y	10.1	53.1	23
NK	S09-V8	RR2Y	10.4	53.0	24
NK	S15-P1	RR2Y	10.1	52.9	25
DynaGro	S12RY44	RR2Y	10.3	52.5	26
NK	S13-H5	RR2Y	10.0	52.3	27
Asgrow	AG0835	RR2Y	9.6	52.0	28
Croplan	R2C0925	RR2Y	10.6	50.8	29
Pioneer	P10T02R	RR2Y	9.8	50.6	30
NK	S11-C8	RR2Y	10.3	49.7	31
Pioneer	P15T83R	RR2Y	9.5	49.6	32
NK	S12-H2	RR2Y	10.4	49.2	33
Croplan	R2C1173	RR2Y	10.3	49.2	34
NK	S06-Q9	RR2Y	10.7	49.1	35
Pioneer	P10T02R	RR2Y	9.4	47.5	36

Chart F

Kensington Soybean Yield Plot

Brand	Variety	Traits	Harvest		Yield Rank
			Moist %	Bu/Acre @ 13% mst	
Asgrow	AG0536	RR2Y	10.8	62.0	1
Pioneer	P10T91R	RR	10.1	61.7	2
Asgrow	AG0934	RR2Y	8.9	61.2	3
Syngenta	S09-V8	RR	9.4	60.2	4
Mycogen	5N122R2	RR2Y	10.8	60.0	5
Pioneer	P10T02R	RR	10.4	60.0	6
Credenz	CZ0767	RR2Y	10.7	59.8	7
Croplan	R2C0945	RR2Y	9.5	59.4	8
Mycogen	5N091R2	RR2Y	9.7	59.3	9
Mycogen	5N157R2	RR2Y	12.2	59.2	10
Croplan	R2C1400	RR2Y	11.2	59.0	11
Syngenta	S06-Q9	RR	10.4	58.8	12
Asgrow	AG1135	RR2Y	9.2	57.5	13
Croplan	R2C1173	RR2Y	10.3	56.8	14
Syngenta	S13-H5	RR	10.8	56.4	15
Mycogen	55105NR2	RR2Y	10.1	56.0	16
Croplan	R2C1625	RR2Y	9.9	55.9	17
Asgrow	AG1733	RR2Y	11.8	54.9	18
Mycogen	5N145R2	RR2Y	10.5	54.2	19
Syngenta	S12-H2	RR	11.2	54.2	20
Asgrow	AG1435	RR2Y	8.6	53.7	21
Asgrow	AG0835	RR2Y	9.8	53.7	22
Croplan	R2C1494	RR2Y	9.8	48.1	23

Chart G

St. Leo Soybean Yield Plot

Brand	Variety	Traits	Harvest		Yield Rank
			Moist %	Bu/Acre @ 13% mst	
Wensman	W3226NR2	RR2Y	9.6	66.3	1
Asgrow	AG2136	RR2Y	10.2	65.4	2
Asgrow	AG1935	RR2Y	9.9	64.7	3
Croplan	R2C2072	RR2Y	9.7	63.6	4
Wensman	W3201NR2	RR2Y	9.7	63.6	4
Croplan	R2C2394	RR2Y	9.8	63.3	6
Croplan	R2C2025	RR2Y	9.6	63.2	7
Croplan	R2C2124	RR2Y	9.8	62.6	8
Wensman	W3214NR2	RR2Y	10.0	62.2	9
Croplan	R2C1625	RR2Y	9.8	62.1	10
Asgrow	AG1733	RR2Y	9.6	62.0	11
Wensman	W3143NR2	RR2Y	9.5	61.1	12
NK	S19-B2	RR2Y	9.7	61.0	13
Wensman	W3195NR2	RR2Y	9.9	60.6	14
Wensman	W3200NR2	RR2Y	9.6	59.9	15
Wensman	W3170NR2	RR2Y	9.8	59.7	16
Asgrow	AG1636	RR2Y	9.5	59.7	17
Wensman	W3158NR2	RR2Y	9.6	59.6	18
Wensman	W3160NR2	RR2Y	9.6	58.9	19
Croplan	R2C2075	RR2Y	9.8	58.8	20
Croplan	R2C1994	RR2Y	9.9	58.7	21
Asgrow	AG1435	RR2Y	9.7	58.6	22
Asgrow	AG2035	RR2Y	10.1	58.6	23
NK	S20-T6	RR2Y	9.9	58.2	24
NK	S21-M7	RR2Y	9.8	57.7	25
Croplan	R2C2444	RR2Y	10.1	56.4	26
NK	S20-T6	RR2Y	9.7	53.6	27
NK	S15-P1	RR2Y	9.7	53.3	28
Croplan	R2C2200	RR2Y	9.9	53.2	29
Pioneer	P15T83R	RR	10.0	51.7	30

Sulfur – A Forgotten Nutrient

BY DAVE SASS, WADE EISCHENS, AND ERIC PAULSON

Sulfur is one of the most important nutrients in crop development, but is often overlooked due to its 'secondary nutrient' status. In recent years, sulfur deficiencies have become a common occurrence. In the past, sulfur has been considered a secondary nutrient, but more recently is being considered the fourth counterpart to macronutrients nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium.

Sulfur serves countless functions in plants. It is necessary for chlorophyll formation, promotes nodulation in legumes, and is a structural component of two of the 21 amino acids that form protein. Sulfur shares a very important relationship with nitrogen. This is not surprising due to the fact that both are key components of protein. Crops that use high levels of nitrogen, such as corn and wheat, will also require a high rate of sulfur.

Although most sulfur is found in organic matter, it must be mineralized before it can be taken up by the crop. Places where sulfur levels tend to be lower are low organic matter soils, sandy soils, and in high rainfall conditions. In our region, we experience all three, with spring rainfall events causing the largest amount of sulfur deficiencies. The past few growing seasons have been cool and wet. It is important to know how crucial sulfur is in your soil fertility program and how it affects your crop's health.

The addition of sulfur to your soil fertility program is paramount, to not only yield, but also grain quality. If you have any questions about sulfur and how it fits into your soil fertility program, please contact your West-Con agronomist for more information.



Fuel Markets

BY JOE MEYER

Happy Holidays from West-Con! Around the holidays, we like to look back on the year and celebrate with friends and family for what we are thankful for. We had a great crop and weather was ideal for most stages of crop development and harvesting. Even though most input prices have been lower than in the past, contracting for next year's crop can be stressful for many producers.

Like the rest of commodities, fuel markets have had to deal with over-supply and demand has been anything but consistent. Crude oil has been in the driver's seat on this commodity bear run. As I'm writing, crude oil is the lowest it's been since 2009. A lot of the headlines in the fuel markets have been about OPEC increasing production and China decreasing demand. Due to these headlines, end users all over the world have been sitting on the sidelines and not pricing anything until they absolutely have to. However, locking in fuel at under budget prices is a great way to minimize risk. Waiting until the last minute to contract fuel leaves you exposed to price movement caused by any unforeseen event.



Big investment companies look at commodities typically when there are abnormalities in the markets. Markets that are abnormally low can provide irresistible opportunities for investors with extra capital to invest. In today's environment, money can move in and out of markets very fast. We all need fuel to run our businesses, and locking in prices ahead of time is a great way to minimize risk in order to capitalize on profits when the markets turn in your favor. If you would like to contract fuel for next spring or fall, contact Jr. Lovegren in Ortonville at (320) 241-5434.

From all of us at West-Con, have a delightful holiday season and thank you for your business.

Twin Brooks Report

BY STEVE NEGEN

Greetings from Twin Brooks

The 2015 harvest is completed. We had a great wheat yield and almost unheard of soybean and corn yields. I know some patrons were worried about Twin Brooks being full, but we managed to find space for everything that came in. Since soybean harvest, we have loaded out five shuttles, which is approximately 2,065,000 bushels. Had we not been able to move these beans out via shuttle we would have had to scramble to Plan B.

Fall fertilizer started out slow, but as the corn disappeared orders rolled in. Mid-November brought a rain and snow mix that delayed or canceled some orders but, overall, fall fertil-

izer application was a success. The chisel plow had its best year yet. We hit over 7,000 acres, and we thank Bill Matthes and Andy Stahl for putting in long hours to complete all these acres.

My compliments go out to everyone who hauled product to Twin Brooks this fall. We heard a lot less engine braking and for the most part the speed was adhered to. This should make for happy neighbors. I also want to thank our employees for all their hard work and long hours. Without them, West-Con couldn't be a successful company.

Thank you for your continued support and we wish you happy holidays and a prosperous New Year!

International Harvester Collector

BY CHRIS AASLAND

West-Con patron Greg Erickson grows corn, soybeans and wheat, making his home north of Kensington, MN. When the farm work is completed, Greg focuses on his other passion, collecting agricultural antiques and memorabilia, specifically International Harvester items. Driving onto Greg's farm place, you are greeted by a metal skeleton, named Rusty, sitting on an old Farmall tractor. Other unique, rustic items are seen decorating the yard, such as an old bicycle, an old wooden wagon with large steel-spoke wheels near the evergreen trees, and an old windmill with a toy peddle tractor mounted to the top in place of wind blades. In front of the Erickson home, next to the sidewalk, is a corner piece with large, eight inch rectangular chain links connecting three old brick cornerstones, which were being discarded when an old, local cemetery was being renovated.

Outside Greg's shop is a Flintstone-inspired bicycle with old, round grinding stones for wheels. Inside is a decorative display of International Harvester signs, grease and oil cans, and other "IH" logo items. Some of the larger signs, including a neon-lit "IH" dealer sign, came from Aamot Implement in Wendell, MN. Greg states, "In 1985, when IH went broke and Case IH took over, anything with an IH logo had to be taken down." The implement owners had all their IH signs sitting in a shed when Greg approached them about purchasing the items. Not interested in selling that day, Greg later got a call from the owner, and he bought the whole works for \$500, a lot of money in 1986. Oil and grease cans from the '50s that Greg's father and grandfather had purchased were saved and are now cleaned up, displayed on shelving in the shop.

Greg's passion for collecting started one day in the attic where his mother had saved all his toy tractors from when he was a kid. He started cleaning and repairing those and then began watching for other things at auctions. Greg states, "The scrap iron pile at most auctions is completely overlooked, and in some cases a good item can be had." An old gas pump in the corner of his shop is a good example. At a local coop auction, Greg was looking over things by the scrap iron pile when he nearly tripped over something covered in quack grass. He thought 'what is this long thing laying down here?' and after further investigation discovered it was a gas pump. A choice, once-bid of \$40 acquired the now fully restored pump with lighted globe. Sitting in front of the gas pump is a showroom-looking International 986 tractor Greg's dad bought new in 1978. Greg states, "It has never been painted and has always been stored inside, aside from field work, keeping it out of the sun and elements. The headliner and foam interior were replaced and that's about it."

Also in the shop is a 1928 International one-ton truck called a Six Speed Special—1928 was the first year they had a two-speed rear end. The truck is a three-speed with high and low ranges. The truck still runs and drives, participating in some of the local parades. Greg is working on the interior, in which the seats have horse hair in them for padding. The throttle for the truck is located on the steering column along with another lever for retarding the spark. The old truck was used as a grain hauler, but Greg cut the original box down, making it more appealing to the eye and easier to see, since the truck has no mirrors. The truck has rubber tires with wooden spoke wheels and three-inch hub caps, which were missing on the rear wheels. A gentleman at



Greg Erickson stands in front of a 1928 International one ton truck in his shop.



International 986 tractor which Greg's dad bought brand new in 1978.



Lawn tractors include a custom IH 560 (left) and a 1961 Cub Cadet.

the Rollag steam threshing show had a couple for Greg and when asked why they were missing all the time on these old trucks, the man replied, "You see, those hub caps screw on, and in the old days on the muddy roads they would screw off when spinning your wheels in the mud."

"IH Collector" continued on page 18



Financing for the Future

BY CHAD SYLTIE

Our 2015 harvest will go down in history as one of the fastest ever. It's time to get the dreaded bookwork done. As one farmer told me, it's better to push your way through book work than have book work push you into a hasty decision.

Full-Farm Financing

We will again offer various financing programs for 2016. This year, as in the past, our goal is to keep financing simple. West-Con has been running a full-farm financing program for many years. It is a complete operating line of credit to handle all your operating costs throughout the year. This has been an excellent program for our growers, providing competitive interest rates. Along with this program we have the option of providing financing for livestock, machinery and real estate purchases to qualified applicants. Please stop in or call the Holloway office for more information on the program. Now is the time to get your financing in place so you can take advantage of prepay discounts on seed, fertilizer and chemicals. It will also be helpful in doing your tax planning to finish up 2015.

John Deere Financial and Quick Link

John Deere Financial and Quick Link will also be available financing programs again in 2016. Both programs



give you the ability to purchase inputs from West-Con and give you until December 2016 to pay back the financing company. Both companies charge interest on the amount of funds you borrow for the amount of time you use it. Many seed companies use John Deere Financial as their source of financing, and it provides a simple way to finance your seed and chemical purchases at very competitive rates. Please check with your West-Con agronomist for more details on this program. When talking with your agronomist, be sure to ask about the interest rates on these special programs because they vary depending upon which products you are purchasing.

Crop Insurance and Crop Hail Needs

Again, West-Con can handle your crop insurance and crop hail needs in Minnesota. We have two licensed agents serving our area. Crop insurance is essential to your operation. Our West-Con agents care about your crops, and since a large portion of your crop inputs may come from our company, it makes good sense to let us help you get quality coverage on your investment.

Thank you to all our customers for taking care of your financial obligations to West-Con and making our collections run smoothly this year. We have a few agronomy accounts to be paid. Please remember that West-Con charges 18% on all past due balances. If you find yourself running out of capital and paying this 18%, please check into the financing programs mentioned above. On another note, deferred fall fertilizer payments are due January 11, 2016.

I wish all of you a merry Christmas and happy New Year! I hope you have enjoyable moments with your family and friends and travel safely. Thank you for supporting your cooperative this past year, and I look forward to working with you again in 2016.

Getting your crop insurance from West-Con is easy. We have agronomists licensed to sell crop insurance in the State of Minnesota.

Call
800-368-3310

Chad Syltje Ext. 1227
Scott Mattocks Ext. 1701

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GRAIN DEPARTMENT

Another Harvest in the Books

BY PAUL MATTSON

What a fall! The weather has been ideal, the crops were plentiful and the quality was excellent. That would be a hat trick in hockey! The part of the equation we missed was that prices aren't great, but things can change. Farmers are some of the most optimistic people.

This year's harvest ran smoothly at all of our facilities. We had to pile some corn outside in Twin Brooks, but had enough space and transportation at our other grain elevators. Some people sound disappointed that they don't see more grain stored outside. Please remember we added 1.2 million bushels of storage space and two 20,000 bushel per hour dump pits in Appleton this year. Customer service was excellent! Our employees, once again, did a great job of keeping things moving. We have been down the road of storing huge amounts of corn and soybeans outside and it is miserable. Your cooperative has invested a great deal in storage space and drying capacity to avoid putting your crop outside and risking spoilage and loss.

As winter approaches, railroads are running very well and continue to be on time or ahead of time. The investments they have made over the last few years are

proving to be beneficial. However, railcar demand is down. Corn exports are almost nonexistent. Improving railcar availability is the decrease in oil shipments. More room on the tracks means the railcars that are there are running faster.

As year end approaches, we take time to be thankful for a great harvest, favorable weather, and you, our valuable patrons. We look forward to meeting your grain marketing needs this coming year.



FROM THE OFFICE

Closing Out 2015

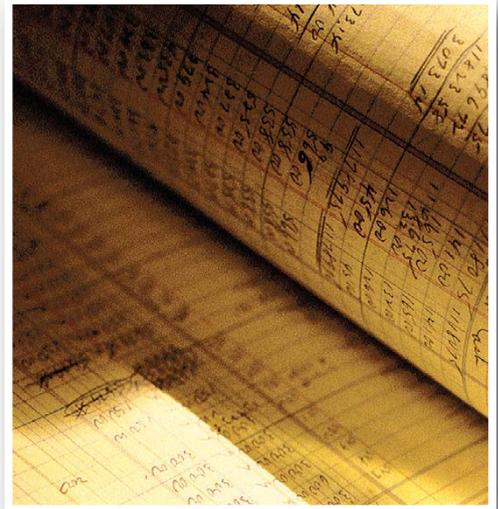
BY AL CONNELL

Our year end is fast approaching, and it's time to get ready for our annual audit. The auditors will be in to review our financial statements in January. Part of their process is to send confirmations to a select number of patrons. It is important that everyone return these confirmations. They will be verifying accounts receivable and grain storage balances. If you agree with the balances, please sign and return directly to the auditors in the envelope provided. If you disagree, state why and return to the auditors. This process gives the auditors outside verification of the balances I provide them. Remember, the auditors are working for all patrons to ensure the company's financial statements are fairly presented.

All 1099 forms will be mailed to patrons by the end of January. If you need summary printouts of the business you did with us this past year, please call the main office and we will mail that information to you.

Checks for deferred payment contracts will be ready Monday, January 4, 2016. Please be sure your contracts are signed and returned to us. Checks will not be issued until each contract has been signed. If you want checks mailed to you, please call to make this request that day.

All drying and freight charges have been billed to anyone who delivered grain placed on storage or delayed pricing this past harvest. It is our pol-



icy that all drying and freight charges be paid immediately. If you choose to wait until you sell the grain, you will be paying our normal finance charge of 1.5% per month or 18% annually.

I thank you for your business in 2015 and wish everyone happy holidays!

Dial 320-394-2171 or 800-368-3310

Once connected the automated attendant answers:

"Thank you for calling West-Con in Holloway"

To reach the **GRAIN DEPARTMENT**, Press 2

- Marketing Press 1
- Accounting Press 2
- Holloway Scale Press 3
- Twin Brooks Scale Press 4
- TA Scale Press 5
- Ortonville Scale Press 6

To reach the **AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT**, Press 3

- Sales Press 1
- Accounting Press 2
- Management Press 3

To reach the **TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**, Press 4

To reach the **GRAIN MARKETS**, Press 5

To speak to our **RECEPTIONIST**, Press 0

Call Flow Example



AGRONOMY NEWS



REPLENISHING SOIL NUTRIENTS

BY CHARLIE HEAD

It has been another successful year of crop production. The last two years have produced some of the best yields we've seen on all crops. However, the last five years have also had some dramatic swings in commodity prices. There have been a lot of questions and concerns about where fertilizer prices have shaken out during this time.

The good news is that fertilizer prices have come down! The average prices on phosphates from four to five years ago are down 30 percent, with nitrogen and potash prices down 40 percent. At this time, we are seeing prices equal to some of the lowest in 10 years.

At right, is a chart indicating fertilizer removal per unit of yield. Our recent exceptional crop yields have depleted plant food from the soil. Don't guess what your soil needs! Taking soil samples to see where your nutrient levels are is critical. Tissue sampling during the growing season is also a good idea, to gauge how well your fertilizer program is doing and current yield potential. This can help you manage decisions on future applications of fungicides and insecticides during the remainder of the growing cycle.

Remember sulfur as a major nutrient to your crops. More and more soil and tissue samples are showing sulfur deficiencies in our crops. Emission controls on power plants and

automobiles have reduced the amounts of sulfur in the atmosphere that used to fall in the form of acid rain. This has reduced the amounts of free sulfur we received in past decades. We have supplemental fertilizer sulfur available as Ammonium Sulfate in dry form, and Ammonium Thio-sulfate in liquid form.

Despite low grain prices, fertilizer remains a good buy. Nothing has as direct an impact on ultimate yield than adequate fertility. Today's substantial price drops on fertilizer are helping to make those farm planning decisions more manageable.

Thank you for your continued support of your cooperative, West-Con. May you have a blessed holiday and prosperous 2016!

CROP	UNIT	N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	S
Alfalfa	ton	51	12	49	5.4
Corn Grain	bu	.90	.38	.27	.08
Corn Stover	bu	.45	.16	1.1	.07
Corn Stover	ton	16	5.8	40	3
Corn Silage	bu	1.6	.51	1.2	.18
Corn Silage	ton	9.7	3.1	7.3	1.1
Soybean Grain	bu	3.8	.84	1.3	.18
Wheat Grain	bu	1.5	.60	.34	.1
Wheat Straw	bu	.07	.16	1.2	.14
Wheat Straw	ton	14	3.3	24	2.8

IH Collector



Continued from page 14

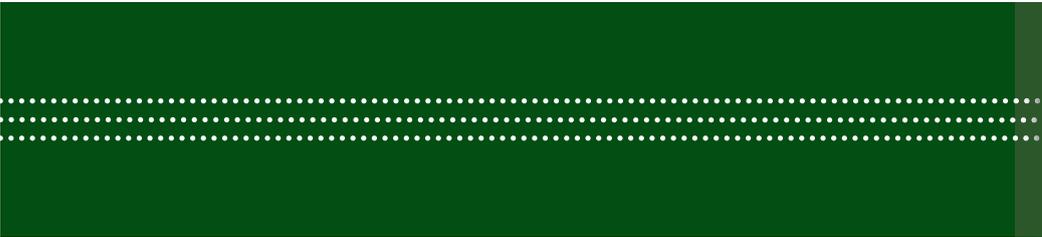
In another building, Greg has a collection of lawn and garden equipment. A project Greg worked on this past summer was converting a Wagner lawn tractor to look like an IH 560. Wagner Company was trying to make a lawn and garden tractor for IH. They made the tractor's hood to look like an IH 560. Greg started with the hood and frame, doing some additional customizing himself. He put some tri-rib tires on the front, and the rear tires are from a garden tiller. Other lawn tractor parts make up the

miniature IH 560 garden tractor. The tractor's grill is a cut down version of an actual IH 560 grill. Alongside this unit is one of the first lawn and garden tractors manufactured by Cub Cadet in 1961. Greg states, "61, '62 and '63 just had Cub Cadet International on the tractors, in '64 they came out with a 70, which is a 7 horse, and 100, which is a 10 horse. Greg also has a series 1, 2 and 3 yard carts that are pulled behind the lawn tractors. Some attachments made by Brinly are displayed by the tractors, including a cultivator, a rear blade

and two single-bottom plows. A sleeve hitch was used as an adaptor for the attachments, as IH didn't make any attachments for the garden tractors.

As another growing season comes to a close with harvest complete, winter can be a slow time of year for most until spring arrives. For Greg Erickson, winter is a time for working in the shop, restoring the latest find and watching for the next opportunity that presents itself.

Thank you for sharing your neat collection, Greg!



Soybean Platforms

BY PAUL ANDERSON

I hope everyone's harvest went well! Looking back at this year's crops, I've been asked two questions rather frequently. What is the difference between platforms? How are we going to control weeds in soybeans?

The most common platform is the Roundup platform. Roundup is a glyphosate herbicide which is meant to kill all plants through translocation of the plant. We have used Roundup widely throughout the area for many years. It is starting to lose its effectiveness on some plant species, but is still a good option. To use the Roundup platform properly, we should use a pre-emerge on the soybeans, followed by Roundup and another chemical to help Roundup on some tougher weeds post-application.

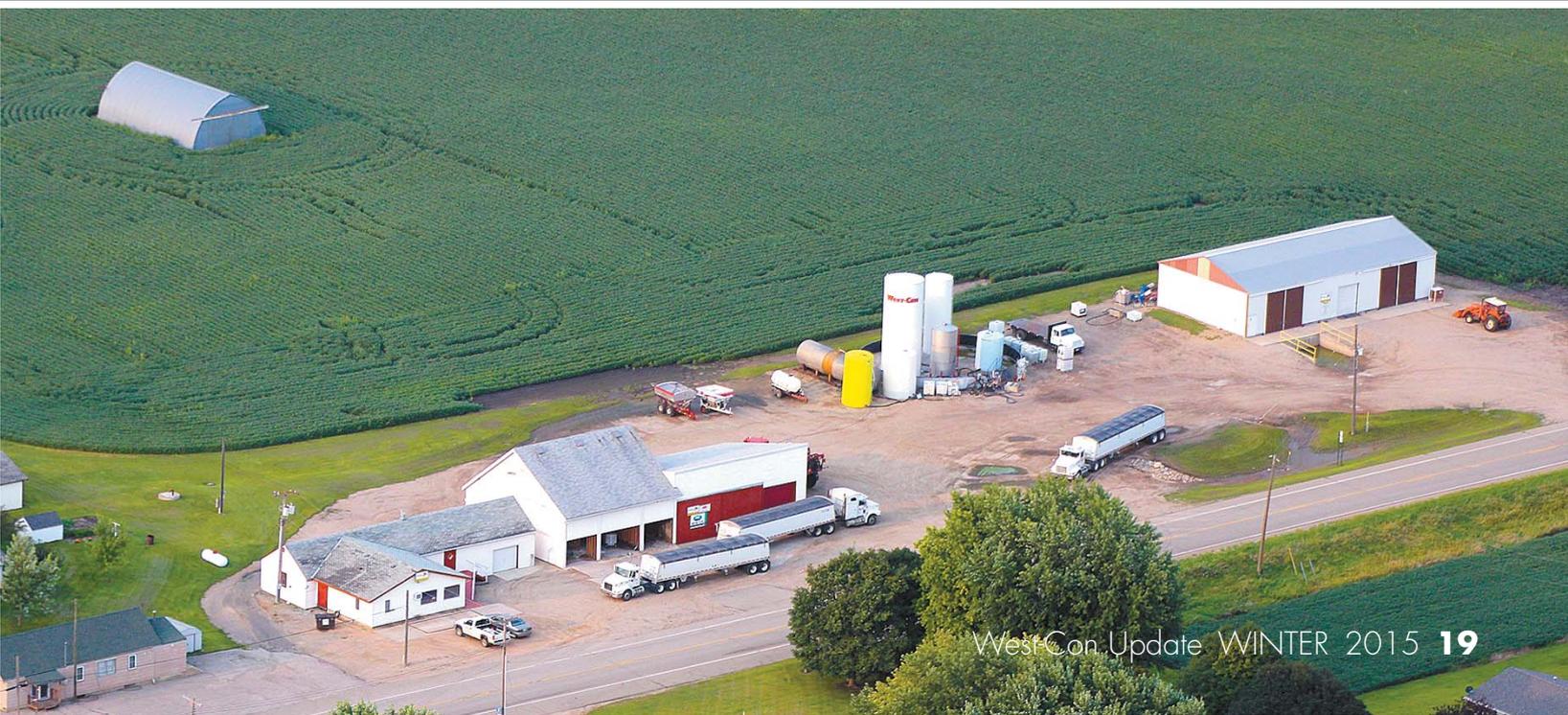
Another common platform is the Liberty link system. Liberty is similar to Roundup, except Liberty is a glufosinate. One main difference is that Liberty kills what it touches so when you are spraying Liberty you should be spraying anywhere from 15 to 20 gallons of water to the acre. As far as the chemical program, a pre-emerge is still recommended, followed by a post-application of Liberty.

The last platform I will discuss is the new Roundup Xtend platform. This is a little different because it still

uses Roundup but also adds Dicamba to the mix. Dicamba was an active ingredient in Banvel or Clarity. However, when this platform gets released you will not be able to spray the old Dicamba formation on these beans, you will have to use Xtend chemical on them. You still want a pre-emerge followed by a post-application. This platform has been approved in the U.S. but not China. We are hoping for approval by spring 2016 planting. If it isn't approved in China before then, it will not be released. If it is approved, it will be a very limited supply.

In closing, the common denominator across these platforms is that the companies recommend you use a pre-emerge followed by at least one if not two post-application in conjunction with using the correct amount of gallons per acre. Keep in mind that these platforms do not cross each other. You can't spray Liberty on Roundup beans, or vice versa. You can't spray Xtend on Liberty or just Roundup beans. Targeting weeds when they are less than three inches tall is also key factor in controlling them.

In closing, I thank you for your business and look forward to doing business with you in the future.



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Capture it

Thank you to this edition's capture it photo submitted by Kathy Bahr of Morris. Pictured at right is her grandson Eli who just turned 1 at the end of November. The photo was taken when he was 10-months-old.

You can't start 'em too young!

In Bahr's words, "This is our sweet little grandson Eli. This was taken during corn harvest 2015. He came dressed for farming and "driving" the grain cart. He just squealed when he saw the tractor, trucks, and combine in the field! The concentration on this little man's face is sure to make you smile."



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