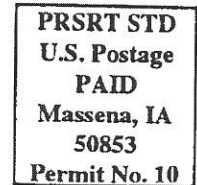




Or Current Resident

Massena 712-779-3515  
 Cumberland 712-774-5412  
 Atlantic 712-243-2465  
 Fontanelle 641-745-3371  
 Greenfield 641-743-2161  
 Sorensen 712-774-5389  
 C-Store 712-779-3440



November 2015

**Manager's  
 Corner**

With the harvest season winding down upon us and another bountiful crop in the bins, we turn our thoughts to the holiday season, a time of year when we count our many blessings. Among them is the great support we receive from you, our member owners.

As you know, farm work never ends. As soon as the harvest is in, plans are already being made for next year. The same is true here at the coop. With two major capital improvements completed (or nearing completion) this year, there's always more to do. That is why your board of directors is committed to investing in our communities for the long haul. What to spend and where always leads to intense discussions at monthly board meetings and annual planning sessions. But keep in mind, none of these improvements can happen if the coop doesn't make money and when we do, we retain some of those savings for future projects and return the rest to our members in cash and deferred dividends. This year, I'm pleased to report that we will be distributing more money to our members than at any other time in the history of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coop. Strong local earnings along with increased regional patronage both contributed

to this distribution. I will go more into detail at the Annual Meeting.

This year's Annual Meeting will be held November 21<sup>st</sup> at the Cumberland Community Building. The Cass County Beef Producers will be grilling rib eye steak sandwiches starting at 6:00, followed by the business meeting at 7:00. Following the meeting, we will be entertained by Mark Mayfield, one of America's finest humorists. His philosophy is simple, say it with humor and people will take the message home. Mark will help you manage change in a high octane, hilarious keynote presentation.

This year, two directors' terms expire; they are Paul Johannes and Kevin Stender. Both have indicated their desire to run another term. At the time of this writing, the nominating committee has not come up with any other candidates.

In closing, I would personally like to encourage you to attend your Annual Meeting. Come have supper on us, get a financial update on the coop, and enjoy some exceptional entertainment. And lastly but not leastly, pick up your check.

See you the 21<sup>st</sup>.

--Randy



**News From The  
 C-Store**

Happy Fall!

With the changing of the seasons we have gotten a new group of employees as we have had our last group move on to different adventures.

We are sincerely sorry about the quality of our pizzas some of you have received the last month. To resolve this situation, we have re-trained our staff.

Over the summer, we added a couple new things to the store. We have a new, larger pizza viewer. Also we got a new roller grill. In addition to our regular hot dogs, we now have Polish sausages, brats and cheddar dogs.

With the holidays around the corner, we offer an assortment of gift cards for that last minute gift. On Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> from open to noon we will have a Christmas Open House. Please stop in for a cup of coffee, hot chocolate and other refreshments.

We will be open Thanksgiving Day, however the kitchen will not open until 5 p.m.

As always, please feel free to stop in with any ideas, questions or concerns.

Have a great holiday season!

--Brenda, Kristin and the C-Store gang

## Seed Sales

We hope this newsletter finds you very busy and that you are well into harvesting an excellent crop for the 2015 season. Harvest is a great time for many reasons, one of which is to start the planning process for next year. Note taking can be a very strategic way to see what operations worked, what didn't work and what may be the things your operation can change to be even more successful next year. Weed control in bean fields seems to be the hot talking point this year. With Roundup becoming less effective on broadleaf weeds, we need to look to other options. Monsanto does have its new Xtend bean out. This is a Dicamba resistant bean. The issue with them right now is China has not approved them for export. If China doesn't approve the Xtend bean for export, Monsanto will not release them for sale. Until this happens, we need to keep looking for a more effective way to control weeds. Liberty beans are another road we can go down. With a good pre-emerged down followed by Liberty, fields can once again be cleaned up. Here at the Coop, we do carry several good lines of Liberty beans.

With harvest still going strong, it is time to start looking ahead to next year. Seed prices are in and the first pay deadline ends November 15<sup>th</sup>. We have several programs in place this year to assist you in your seed purchase pricing. We carry many competitive brands with each brand carrying its own strengths and weaknesses. Knowing where to place each one can help maximize yield for you. We also have financing available to assist in your purchase. A 0% interest or a 1% below prime will both be available. If you have never bought seed from us, I challenge you to try us. Let Steve, Dave P., Dave B., Don or me sit down with you to put a package together that will work for you. We would love to help you with your seed needs. One thing to remember, when members purchase seed with us, they can receive a 5 to 6%

dividend payment at the end of the year. On a \$200 bag of corn that is \$10 to \$12 back at the end of the year.

One last note, I would like to say thank you. With your support, we had a successful year again! We look forward to talking with you this year.

Thanks,  
Trent Raasch  
515-321-9334

## Bookkeeping

Well, almost a year already and I still feel like the new girl. Each day brings new adventures and challenges and I love it! I just want to thank all of my co-workers and customers for your patience while I learn the ropes. I apologize if I have to ask more than once what your name is or if you have to wait a couple minutes while I figure out where something is on the computer or who is on the scale, but I am getting there. Slow and steady wins the race!

There are many facets to the coop business from bookkeeping to weighing and testing corn, fixing gas pumps, delivering grain, fertilizer, fuel and propane. I had no idea when I began this position how much the local coop actually does and how integral they are to the community. Did you know we employ almost 50 full time and 20 part time employees? It's not just about the corn and soybeans; have you seen the station in Cumberland? They have everything from milk to curtain rods. In Massena, we offer not only feed for your cattle, but for your chickens, horses, sheep, pigs, dogs, cats and birds. And if you need to get rid of mice, bugs and weeds, we've got you covered. While I was in Fontanelle, I noticed their rack of gardening supplies and I'm sure there are things I missed in Greenfield. Stop by any of our locations and check it out. I assure you, you will be pleasantly surprised.

We have seen many loads of corn and soybeans in the last month and I don't think we are done yet. Be

sure to let the scale operator know whose grain you are delivering. It is much easier for us to put it in the computer right the first time than it is for us to fix it later. We appreciate your business and want to be accurate with your records. Be safe out there!

I hope to see you at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coop annual meeting on November 21. You will get to enjoy rib eye sandwiches grilled by the Cass County Beef Producers, sides, salads and desserts by Stephanie Ticknor, hear from Board President Joe Platt, upgrades from auditor Jim English and enjoy some entertainment. On top of that we will hand out patronage dividends and door prizes!  
--Leann

## Cumberland Station News

Hello again from the Cumberland station.

Finally, we are past the cold, wet summer with the torrential rains and have been blessed with several weeks of perfect harvest weather. But all good things must come to an end. All too soon, Old Man Winter will be blowing down our necks. Before winter catches us off guard, remember to check antifreeze strength and winterize those diesel tractors you plan on using this winter. We have in stock several options, including Howes, Power Service and Stanadyne. We also stock RV antifreeze.

Thanksgiving is fast approaching and all too soon it will be Christmas. Before we celebrate these special family days, take time to join your business family and celebrate another successful year at the annual meeting. It will be held on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> at the Cumberland Community Building.

We would like to thank you for your business this last year and look forward to helping you in the future. Have a great winter and happy holidays.

--Dave Jones,  
Station Manager

## Agronomy

Well, 2015 will soon be history and planning for 2016 has begun. Since I have been here at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coop, I have never seen corn get as dry as it did this fall. The days I assisted probing grain, I thought the moisture on the grain tester was wrong or set on the soybean setting as the corn moisture was like soybean moisture. Mother Nature did help on some drying costs.

The last couple year's yield have been good on both corn and soybeans. With that said, the uptake of crop nutrients has been high also. With corn and soybean prices lower and inputs costs still up, many growers are wondering about crop fertility. In a nutshell, that depends on several factors. First, what are the soils measuring for nutrients? Are they high, low or in optimum range? Doing a soil test is the best way to find out. Here at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coop, we have been taking composite soil tests already to see what level the soil is at for pH, phosphorus, potassium and other nutrients. Lower levels will see a higher rate of return on dry application than a very high level. At optimum or high levels, a maintenance application of dry fertilizer would still enable very good yields.

Instead of composite soil tests, look into doing management zone or grid soil sampling to get a better snapshot of the fertility levels in the field. With this technology, we are putting the fertilizer and the appropriate amount in the area that is needed or more in higher producing soils for that very top end yield. Contact one of our agronomy personnel for more information and cost.

Secondly, is the farm rented, crop shared or personally owned? On rental ground that is a year-by-year contract, it is still a good idea to know what soil levels are like. Figure out a yield goal and apply a one-year maintenance level of P and K. On average, corn will use .38 lbs. phosphorus and .30 lbs. potassium per bushel. Soybeans

use .8 lbs. phosphorus and 1.5 lbs. potassium per bushel. With crop share, communication with the landlord is important as perhaps he or she wants to increase or maintain fertilizer rates. If you own the land, try to maintain optimum to high levels of fertility. So if there is a situation like this year with crop prices down and trying to maintain profitable margins, go ahead and apply a maintenance level versus a build level on that farm.

Soil pH is another factor to look at for this upcoming season. On some soil reports, I am starting to see soil pH dropping into the 5.6-6.0 ranges. An optimum pH level for corn and soybeans is in the 6.5 range and for alfalfa a soil pH of 6.7 or above. The buffer pH is used to measure the amount of lime needed to raise the soil pH to the desired level. The lime recommendations on soil sample reports are based on pounds of actual lime needed. The lime in our area varies from 46% to 55% actual Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent or ECCE. So a two ton spread of lime would have one ton or 2000 lbs. of lime if at 50% ECCE. In our area, Schildbergs have the market for lime, so knowing the ECCE is important to get the most bang for your buck. I know that Atlantic and Daggett mines have better ECCE than say the Menlo or Stennet mines. We have a person contracted that can assist in application of VRT and/or flat rates to spread lime.

Thanks for your business this past year and I'm looking forward to working for you in 2016.

--Scott Svoboda  
Agronomy Manager

## Fontanelle

Daylight Savings Time. The World Series. Just a few reminders that the growing season and the calendar year are winding down. Like Steve Martin on Saturday Night Live, it's been a 'wild and crazy' year.

Reflecting on this past growing season, it started out well. A majority of spring NH<sub>3</sub> was applied in late

March and early April. The planting season got off to a good start in mid to late April. May turned off cooler and wetter. What wasn't planted in April got in the ground last May and June in probably less than ideal conditions, including some of my own. For the balance of the growing season, we had limited stress on the corn and bean crops. Ample moisture, cooler than normal temperatures in July and August, an almost perfect September and October dry down period to finish them off. Bean harvest is 99% complete now, corn is over 50% harvested with both crops performing well above our area average.

Now, reflecting on our marketing plans. Did we have enough sold pre-harvest? Too much? Did we meet or exceed our growing expectations? How about our price expectations? What are our 2016 marketing plans for what the 'old crop' is now and what you plan to produce next year? My opinion is that we will see a lot of sideways trading this marketing year and a slightly lower trend ahead of us. Right now, there are ample supplies of wheat, corn and beans. I've received numerous emails/pictures of the piles of soybeans across the Midwest. The world wheat supplies are up and overall, the corn yields are at trend line and above. Now I'm not trying to be 'Negative Ned from WKRP in Cincinnati,' but take advantage of short upticks in the markets when they are available. Yes, exports and usage will remain good, but like always, China will probably be the wild card. Be smart, don't be greedy, plan and execute a market strategy.

The Coop had another profitable year. Plan to attend the annual meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Come and enjoy some good food, entertainment and pick up your patronage check.

Be safe.

--John Baudler  
Fontanelle Location



## Massena

Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and Happy New year!  
And what a year for David.

First off, thank you all for your support and patience while I learn my new job. I'm gaining, but still have a long way to go. Also a big thanks to the crew at 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I've got a great group of people to work with.

As you all know, the big bin is up and it is full. Piles of corn all over the state. What a corn crop. We're still working out a few bugs and as of this writing, our bin project still isn't complete. But it sure is a big improvement from the old system.

NH3 season is upon us and just a reminder to take your time and be safe. I'm hoping I can get over and help Rich and crew this fall. After doing that for 36 years, it just wouldn't feel right if I wasn't hauling a tank or troubleshooting a problem.

I know this is short, but the corn is rolling in. Once again, thank you for supporting the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Coop. Have a safe fall and happy holidays.

--David Bissell

## Greenfield

Another harvest season is upon us with some satisfactory yields. We were able to keep ahead of harvest demands and not have to wait on trucks hauling grain out of our facility. Yield results showed us that a good soil fertility program plus ample nitrogen demands gave us very surprising returns. Now is the time to plan for the 2016 crop. Due to future prices on corn and soybeans, we will have to shave some operating costs. Where do we start? By cutting soil fertility costs (which represents 60% of the total production), we can probably cut back but the soil samples we have taken so far shows us that the crops pulled excessive nutrients from the soil to produce the good yields we experienced. Cutting back will only result in lower production and not give us a chance for the crop to mature

properly as far as dry down, etc. It was rewarding this fall to take in 12.5% to 15.5% corn out of the fields with minimal drying costs.

Nitrogen cut backs will only affect our yield per acre plus hurt the basic metabolism of the plant. Seed costs are not giving as much sympathy on the pricing. Chemistry will be an opportunity to cut back due to changes in the mode of action on soybean spraying. Due to resistant waterhemp pressures, Roundup is not the answer right now. We had several soybean producers who tried Liberty soybeans, which gave us satisfactory results which was due to a mode of action change.

Bottom line, we need a game plan for production next year. Give us a call so we may put your individual game plan into action on the 2016 crop.

We appreciate your past business and your future business. We are here to serve you!

--The gang from Greenfield

## Sorensen News

Fall is here and harvest is underway. We have had ideal weather for harvest, excluding the dust hazards.

The corn and soybean yields are so much better than expected. Wet conditions this spring resulted in late planting in some areas so the farmers are grateful, especially with lower grain bids. Here at Sorensen's, we are estimating the soybean harvest to be two-thirds complete. We have been transferring to other sites in order to make room. Corn harvest is just getting started. It appears that we will have a ground pile again.

Most of you know Mike Arthur has been employed full-time. He has been working with Steve and is learning quickly. He has driven a tender truck in the spring and may again.

On a seed note – many growers are frustrated with weed control in their Roundup ready beans. As an alternative, your Coop is now selling Stine brand soybean seed and seed corn. As a result, the grower

has the option of planting Liberty-Link soybeans. This gives the grower an option for the Roundup resistant weeds. Our Croplan brand seed has Liberty-Link beans as well. For latest pricing and supply, stop and see Steve or call 712-779-0188.

We appreciate your business and look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting. Thank you for your patience during this busy season. Please feel free to call with any questions or concerns. We are here to serve you.

--Steve, Mike and Phyllis



## Coop Annual Meeting

Sat., Nov. 21

Meal at 6:00 p.m.  
Rib eye steak  
sandwiches grilled by  
the Cass County Beef  
Producers

Business Meeting at  
7:00 p.m.

Entertainment by  
Mark Mayfield,  
Humorist

Come have supper,  
get a financial update  
and enjoy some  
entertainment!

See you there!