



First Cooperative Association

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Visit Our Web Site At: www.firstcoop.com

June 2013



MANAGER'S CORNER

By **Jim Carlson**

General Manager

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It's really amazing to consider how in just a few short months our area has gone from being so very dry to now being so very saturated, and I know all of you have been frustrated by the delays of this spring planting season, as I can assure you all of us at FCA have been as well.

Despite the weather, however, I think you'll agree we have come a very long way in a very short period of time with this 2013 crop.

I want to thank all of you for your cooperation and the outstanding teamwork that was shown in working with the employees of FCA who were working very hard to serve your needs, and who will continue to do so as the season progresses.

A lot of work needs to be done to get the remainder of the soybeans planted, and of course the spraying season will certainly be an even more challenging one now that so much has been condensed into a shortened season.

Here again, your cooperation, teamwork and good communications will be crucial, as will your patience and understanding that our people will do all they possibly can to provide you and all of the customers they work with the very best service each day.

For a moment I think we may need to pause and think about the very tedious situation we were in as March of



NOTICE OF HOLIDAY CLOSING

All Locations Will Be Closed

THURSDAY, JULY 4th

As Our Entire Country Celebrates

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Please Plan All Of Your

*Supply-Service-Business Needs In Advance
So We Can Serve You Smoothly & Efficiently*

2013 was coming to an end, since I feel it may bring a sharper perspective to this season.

There is an old saying that provides a message we need to keep in mind: "It takes a long time to **Get Dry**, but only takes a few days/weeks to **Get Wet** all over again."

There can be absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind that as April arrived this year, pretty much all of the FCA area was **Extremely Dry**.

Indeed, things turned hot and dry for our area in the summer of 2011, stayed dry through the fall, so much so in fact that NH-3 applications that fall were at some point curtailed because the soils were so dry.

The winter of 2011/12 was extremely dry, with minimal snowfall and some of the highest temperatures on record for the January through March period. As spring changed to summer the thermometer pushed higher and some of Iowa's hottest, driest months stretched out one after another into fall.

In September 2012 I wrote in my article about the 15th month extended dry spell we were in and how all of us were certainly hoping that hot, dry spell would end.

We received more snow this past winter, and thus far this spring the frequent showers would seem to indicate those hopes have been fulfilled, and thankfully so, for even though we are often frustrated with the delays and challenges they have created, our area in particular was one that could least

afford of endure a continuation of the kind of weather we received from the summer of 2011 on.

The moisture that has delayed you in April and May could prove crucial to your crop as summer unfolds, since we know how fast Mother Nature can shut off the moisture, and if she does so again, think of where your crop's future would be had we not received this moisture in the spring of 2013.

PROJECT UPDATE: Work is off to a slower start on this year's main FCA project, since that work is also dealing with wet conditions.

Site work and preparation is underway at Battle Creek now for a new 4,000 bushel per hour corn dryer we will be installing that will also include the grain legs and conveyor system to enhance the efficient movement of corn into and out of the dryer.

With a late start on corn planting and prospects for increased demand for drying, the fall completion of this project couldn't be more timely for customers who deliver wet corn to Battle Creek.

NEWEST WEB SITE FEATURES: In the April newsletter we announced some of the changes and enhancements FCA has made to bring added convenience, special features and even more information to our customers by making all of the information included on the FCA web available on the many mobile devices that so many of you now have/use.

CORNER

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**AGRONOMY
NEWS
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It's been quite a year, and when you consider just how few favorable days we had with favorable field conditions to work in, it's definitely a testimony to just how far teamwork, good communications and cooperation between all of you and your **FCA Agronomy Team** can carry us.

A couple of additional factors also come to mind, and of course the size and capabilities of the equipment assets you are using in your fields these days, coupled with the custom application assets you have in your corner at your cooperative, enable you to work fields and plant your crops, and allow you/us to spread, spray and/or apply crop nutrients and crop protection products to a greater number of acres in less time than ever before.

Plus, I think we really need to give added consideration to the crucial role fall fertilizer has played as it became a steadily increasing part of your standard crop management plan, for it was not all that many years ago that only limited emphasis or importance was being given to applying nutrients in the fall, particularly NH-3.

Just think of how daunting the task would be if you waited until spring to apply all of your NH-3 as many of you formerly did, especially in a cool, soggy spring season like this one has been thus far.

I'm writing this article the first week of June and at this time the **FCA Agronomy Team** is working hard in the often narrow windows of opportunity Mother Nature has been giving us to apply pre-emerge crop protection products in soybean acres and, at the same time, also focus on getting post applications underway in corn.

Adverse weather seems to challenge our mutual plans and schedules at every turn, thus there is an even greater need for good communications between you and your **FCA Agronomist** so we can be on the same page knowing who needs what, where and when to best coordinate

manpower, equipment and all the logistics of getting the work completed for you and everyone else in the most timely, efficient manner.

As soon as we get some warmer temperatures, everything is going to start changing and taking off very rapidly, and that means both crop and weed height and development, a likely surge in insect populations and perhaps as a result of our wet conditions the potential for various disease threats to your crop's overall health, performance and yields.

Fortunately, we now have far more options, alternatives and flexibility than ever before in terms of the crop protection products and strategies we can turn to, especially in soybeans and, in recent years, increasingly more so in corn as well.

Work closely with your **FCA Agronomist** to discuss your specific needs and/or challenges/threats to your crops, and they will be able to help you select the most effective solutions that address them.

Finally let me mention that FCA will have a number of test plots available for you to visit as the season progresses.

We feel there is some very useful and valuable information you can receive from these plots, so talk to you **FCA Agronomist** to arrange a time to inspect this year's test plots.

**THE
PETROLEUM
REPORT**

**By
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We are very proud of the fact that your **FCA Fuel/Energy Department** is a **Full Service Business** that offers the full spectrum of fuels, lubrication products and energy to the customers we serve throughout the

entire year.

For example, just as we are completing the busy season for the **LP Division** as the 2012/13 heating season concludes, we're also gearing up for the start of the next season as **LP Contracting & LP Summer Fill** programs move into their second full month of availability.

As mentioned in the April newsletter, **LP Summer Fill** gives you the opportunity to take advantage of the traditionally lower late spring and summer prices in the market by having your tank filled during this period.

For doing so, you get a discount on the posted price, as we offer a 10 cent per gallon discount for **Summer Fills** prior to June 30th, a 7 cent discount for filling in July, and a 5 cent discount for August fills.

All **LP Summer Fills** have the billing deferred until the end of August, and if you **Pay Within 5 Days of your Summer Fill Delivery** you can also receive an **Additional 10 Cent Per Gallon Discount**.

FCA's LP Contracting program has also been underway for a month now, and it gives you several flexible contracting options.

We also offer a **Budget Billing** program that allows you to spread your energy expense over an extended period of months rather than struggle with those budget busting high energy bills during peak use winter months.

Qualified customers can also receive a **2 cent per gallon discount for being on a regularly scheduled delivery route**, which also eliminates having to call in to place each order.

FCA also offers flexible programs and the full spectrum of services for all of your fuel needs, and our spring/fall contracting programs for diesel fuels have saved customers many fuel dollars over the years.

As mentioned elsewhere, our **PETROLEUM**
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**LOCK IN YOUR SUPPLY & PRICE EARLY WITH
FCA'S FALL DIESEL CONTRACTING PROGRAM**

The Fall Diesel Contracting program for 2013 begins in June so you can start to contract your anticipated needs for the fall harvest season as this program gets underway. As in the past, we are offering our customers their choice of convenient options to use for contracting purposes. Those options are as follows:

- 1.) 100% Pre-Paid Contract**
- 2.) Maximum Price Contract**
- 3.) A Firm Booking with 20 cents/gallon down payment requirement.**

*Your local office and/or any of the **FCA Fuel Team** will be happy to assist you with your contracting needs, so please get in touch with those people to contract.*

FCA MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS TO AREA YOUTH

Since 1997 the First Cooperative Association Scholarship Program has awarded in excess of \$124,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors in our trade area.

Here are the 16 recipients for 2013 that were each awarded a \$500 scholarship. Good Luck and Best Wishes in all of your future endeavors to these young men and women.

TYLER ALBERS

Tyler is the son of Dennis Albers & Karen Albers and a graduate of Ridge View High School.

He plans to attend Iowa Central Community College to major in Logistics & Transportation Management.



ASHTON ANDERSON

Ashton is the son of Doyle & Melanie Anderson and a graduate of Sioux Central High School.

He plans to attend Iowa State University to major in Agribusiness.



CODY ANDERSON

Cody is the son of Kel & Sherrri Anderson and a graduate of Alta-Aurelia High School.

He plans to attend Iowa Central Community College and transfer to South Dakota State University or Iowa State University to major in Livestock Production and/or Ag Business.



COLBY BEHRENS

Colby is the son of Keith & Denise Behrens and a graduate of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School.

He plans to attend Iowa State University to major in Zoology.



STETSON DAGEL

Stetson is the son of Bruce & Leah Dagele and a graduate of Cherokee Washington High School.

He plans to attend the University of South Dakota and major in Pre Physical Therapy.



KIRBY GOETTSCH

Kirby is the son of Brad & Jen Goettsch and a graduate of Ridge View High School.

He plans to attend Iowa State University to major in Agriculture Studies.



MARC HUSMAN

Marc is the son of Bruce & Cindy Husman and a graduate of Cherokee Washington High School.

He plans to attend South Dakota State University to major in Ag Systems Technology.



SHANE JOHNSON

Shane is the son of Mark & Karen Johnson and a graduate of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School.

He plans to attend Northwestern College to major in Computer Tech/Biblical Studies.



JODI MILLER

Jodi is the daughter of Terry Miller & Nancy Miller and a graduate of Ridge View High School.

She plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to major in Interior Design.



TYLER PRUNTY

Tyler is the son of Kyle & Karla Prunty and a graduate of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School.

He plans to attend Kirkwood Community College and transfer to Iowa State University and major in the Agricultural field.



KELSI SNYDER

Kelsi is the daughter of Gary & Nancy Snyder and a graduate of Alta-Aurelia High School.

She plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to major in Accounting.



MASON TODD

Mason is the son of Kerby & Laura Todd and a graduate of Sioux Central High School.

He plans to attend Buena Vista University to major in Agriculture Engineering.



JAYDE VONDRAK

Jayde is the daughter of Mike & Molly Vondrak and a graduate of Ridge View High School.

She plans to attend AIB College of Business and major in Accounting.



TAYLOR WEILER

Taylor is the daughter of Cory & Robin Weiler and a graduate of Remsen-Union High School.

She plans to attend Morningside College and her major is undecided.



MITCHELL WERTHMAN

Mitchell is the son of Ted & Brenda Werthman and a graduate of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School.

He plans to attend Kirkwood Community College to major in Ag Business.



GRACIE WINTERHOF

Gracie is the daughter of Dan & Lynn Winterhof and a graduate of Alta-Aurelia High School.

She plans to attend the University of Northern Iowa to major in Interior Design.



**FEED
FOCUS**
By
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Here it is June of 2013, and as we look at all that is happening with our overall economy we find ourselves still in some very uncertain times in the livestock sector.

I am coming to the conclusion that uncertainty has now become the new normal we will need to learn to live with. That and with extremes of every description.

Last year we prayed for rain. This year many in the Midwest pray for the frequent rains to subside to allow for planting to progress, while prayers for rain continue to be raised for our friends out West.

Inputs are still high and markets continue to struggle

What can/should we do next?

The **Feed Team** here at your FCA is working hard with a number of our suppliers, including Hubbard Feed and QLF, to look at alternative cow and light calf feedstuffs, and within the next couple of weeks we will be putting the finishing touches on some programs we believe will be helpful to the Iowa cow/calf producers we serve.

We are also looking at early weaning and regular weaning strategies for our cow/calf producers and, at the same time, we're closely analyzing our new calf receiving program.

As we move into summer and more information on these and other issues becomes available we will be keeping our producers informed, so please keep in touch.

New & Improved: Purina Animal Nutrition has recently announced their newly improved line of Ultra Care Pig Starters, and we have seen some outstanding taste preference and performance figures resulting from these improvements.

I encourage you to work closely with your **FCA Feed Salesman** so you can give these formulas a try.

QLF NEWS: I am very pleased to announce that FCA is proud to be named one of the **Top Ten QLF Dealers in the U.S. for 2012.**

FCA's total growth in tons sold placed 5th overall and we also

placed 5th in total feedlot tonnage nationally.

The most gratifying news came as QLF announced FCA placed 3rd nationally in cow/calf tons.

On behalf of FCA and the **Feed Team** I want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all of our QLF customers for their support and business which earned this recognition for your cooperative.

I also want to thank the **FCA Feed Team** for their efforts to supply and serve our feed customers with these quality QLF products, and of course a big thanks from us also goes out to the entire crew at QLF for all of their help and support.

SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH: In closing this month I would like to personally encourage all of our customers and prospective customers to try to take as much time as possible over the course of the summer to get out to show your support for the young men and women of our area by attending some of the youth activities they will be involved in through their schools, communities or various groups.

Whether it is a Little League baseball or softball game, livestock shows and/or auctions at the local county fair(s), a fund raising event at their school or church or any of the many activities which will be underway all across the area, these young people need our support, appreciation and encouragement to show them we truly do care about the values and lessons that come with their involvement and participation in these activities/events.

All too often, it seems, we feel we are too busy or don't have/take enough time to enjoy or share the

things our young people are interested in doing or are participating in, and in the process we can miss out on some of the most enjoyable and memorable times in their lives.

During the past couple of weeks I have attended and enjoyed a few Little League or High School baseball and softball games, plus I've been to a couple of jackpot swine shows which were also a good time.

The range of emotions, the commitment and the determination demonstrated by all of the young people participating in these activities was a joy and a pleasure to see, and to share in with them simply by being there to support them.

PETROLEUM

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Diesel Fuel Contracting is now underway and I encourage you to take advantage of this program.

We sell, service and install a wide range of heaters from the leading manufacturers of heating units, including LB White and LB White Infraconic Brooder Heaters, Modine Heaters, ADP Cayenne Heaters, Empire Wall Hung Heaters and the Detroit Re-Verber-Ray Tube Heaters.

FCA handles new/used LP tanks, LP gas piping systems, vaporizers and the Rego & Fisher product line.

We have experienced/certified factory trained technicians providing a full range of services, including design shop heating systems, LP service systems for both inside and outdoor installation in shops, livestock buildings, garages and outbuildings and, of course, for your home.

We do trenching work, and we take care of installation, service and repair on all the products we handle.

MARTY LAU JOINS FCA FUEL/ENERGY TEAM AS CERTIFIED ENERGY SPECIALIST

We are pleased to introduce Marty Lau to all of FCA's customers and we hope you give him a nice welcome to our cooperative, our local communities, your farms and businesses as you have the opportunity to meet him.

Marty came on board in late April and will be working with all of the FCA locations and their customers to provide service for the full spectrum of fuels and lubricants plus the energy products and programs we offer.

Marty is a native of the Cushing/Correctionville area. He has a diversified agricultural background spanning over 25 years in retail sales and management working with both the cooperative and private sectors for businesses in Holstein and Pearson.

For hobbies, Marty enjoys participating in rodeo team roping events, and spending time on the farm with his two children, daughter Sara who is 9 and son Justin who is 14.





HEDGERS' HOTLINE

By
**Randy
Dunn**

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One year ago at this time, the corn and soybean crops had long since been planted and it looked like a big crop could be on the way.

With those prospects of a big crop, old crop prices were \$5.88 and \$12.95 for corn and soybeans respectively, and the new crop prices were \$4.68 and \$12.12 at that same time.

Little did we know on June 1, 2012 that there wasn't much rain headed our way for the rest of the summer, and those prices would ultimately turn out to be near the bottom for the year.

Today we stand at \$7.11 and \$15.15 for old crop corn and soybeans, and \$5.00 and \$12.45 for new crop prices.

Due to the tight supply caused by the short crops from 2012, the spreads between new and old crop prices have widened considerably, and it is actually a little surprising to me that new crop prices are relatively close to last year.

With the tight supply that we have to work with until the 2013 harvest gets started, odds are good that old crop prices could maintain current levels for some time well into the summer, even with good growing weather.

New crop prices, on the other hand, will most likely fluctuate with whatever the latest weather trend happens to be.

Keep in mind that we don't have to have a bin buster for crops this fall to significantly increase the surplus for the 2013-2014 marketing year compared to 2012-2013.

South American farmers had as bad of a growing year in 2012 as North American growers did, which contributed to world shortages of both corn and beans.

The 2013 South American crops are now harvested and were extremely good, therefore if North America rebounds with a good crop this year, the shortage will be over.

Our national trend yields for this year are about 160 bushels per acre

for corn and 44 bushels per acre for soybeans, and I believe if we would happen to reach these levels of production, our new crop prices are almost certainly headed for a severe decline.

We only need to raise national averages of about 145 bushels per acre for corn and 42 bushels per acre for soybeans to meet next year's projected usage, and any production over those levels adds to the surplus and drags down prices.

One thing we know for sure is that new crop and old crop prices will eventually come together, the only question to be answered is which crop moves in the direction of the other.

If weather is not an issue, then old crop prices will decline toward new crop once processors feel they will be able to secure enough bushels to make it to harvest.

If weather threatens the crop size, then maybe new crop prices can rise some to fill the gap.

Keep in mind the spring crop insurance prices of \$5.65 for December CBOT corn and \$12.87 for November CBOT soybeans.

This would equate to \$5.23 new crop cash corn price and \$12.34 new crop cash soybean price, so if we can beat those prices it might be a good place to make some new crop sales if you haven't done so already.

CORNER

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The most recent addition we have made is a new **Employment Opportunity Feature** that lists openings that we have for a variety of positions and duties right here at FCA.

If you know of someone looking for employment, including a son, daughter, friend or relative or even yourself, this new feature includes information on positions FCA is seeking to fill.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Elsewhere we have featured the 16 recipients of the Class of 2013 who will each be receiving a \$500 scholarship from FCA in our continuing program of recognizing outstanding achievements by our area youth and assisting in their further education as they move on to the next chapter in their lives.

Many of these young people will be entering agriculture related and rural study fields, and many of them intend to work in rural areas upon completion of their college careers.

This is part of a culture that is both strongly supported and encouraged by First Cooperative in the hopes of continuing and strengthening Iowa's rural economy.

On behalf of all of us at FCA I want to congratulate all of these young men and women, and I am sure all of you will join with me in wishing them and all of the graduates from the Class of 2013 the very best for the future.

FCA NOW CARRIES DEF FOR DIESEL ENGINES

2.5 Gallon Jugs * 55 Gallon Drums * 275 & 330 Gallon Totes

We also have the pumping equipment available for purchase in a variety of styles to meet your specific needs, plus delivery on drums and totes is available.

Check with FCA for our pumping equipment/delivery pricing.