



Country Chronicles

Accounts of Land O'Lakes Swine Feed Success

Phil Bush, Cleghorn, IA



Phil Bush started farming after graduating from high school in 1972. Today, Phil and his wife Norma own and operate an 800 acre grain farm, 2000 head finishing operation, and also a 1000 head beef calf enterprise. Phil follows primarily a 50/50 crop rotation. He has been grid sampling for the past 14 years and follows a well defined manure management plan. He gathers manure samples in the fall and applies his own liquid manure according to his manure management plan. The swine enterprise consists of two totally slatted swine barns with double sided curtains. The buildings were constructed in 1997 and 1999. The building site has a neat well-kept appearance and the buildings are maintained in excellent condition.

Phil works closely with a limited number of dependable feeder pig brokers. Phil and Norma purchase 2000 feeder pigs every 18 weeks at approximately 40 to 50 lbs body weight on the open market, and transport their hogs to market using their own semi-trailer. Phil has used risk management practices (e.g. hedging, several packer contracts, etc.) since the construction of his first building in 1997.

For several years, Phil has fed the LeanGain[®] DDGS Premix program to his market hogs. Doug Davis, a Land O'Lakes Purina Feed Swine Consultant working with First Cooperative Association, balances these best cost rations for digestible amino acids using the DNS software program. Doug also provides Phil with other tools to allow him to follow feed budgets and record feed usage for each phase of growth. Phil keeps detailed records so Doug can provide him with meaningful closeout reports. Currently, Phil has all his feed ground and mixed by the First Cooperative Association Mill at Larrabee, IA.

In July of 2008, Phil decided to change from the LeanGain[®] DDGS Premix program to a 6-phase EcoCare[®] feeding program. "The **smell of ammonia is not as strong** as it was prior to the feeding of the EcoCare[®] program," says Phil. He adds, "The **amount of crust on the pits has been reduced** since changing to EcoCare[®] feed. Actually, today there is not much crusting. It's not like it used to be!" Normally, Phil would have removed 45 loads of manure from each of the pits. He reported that in the fall of 2009, he removed from 50 to 55 loads of manure from each building pit. Since he didn't have to break up as much crust, Phil commented that he felt the agitation time may have been slightly reduced, and that he used less power and didn't have to agitate the manure as fast and was able to reduce the tractor speed. He further commented "**I know the manure pumps out quite a bit better.**"

Prepared by: Doug Davis, Land O'Lakes Cooperative Swine Consultant at First Cooperative Association in Iowa.

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