

SFG Update

Smith Fertilizer & Grain

April 14, 2017

Mark White

Knoxville Location Manager



Hopefully by the time you read this corn planters are rolling across the fields. Today, April 7th we are seeing the sun for the second day after about 2 weeks of cloudy wet weather. The crop nutrients are 85% or more applied and we are ready for the final push to finish this task. More farmers planted cover crops last fall so our focus has shifted to spraying these fields as soon as the weather allows. This is the second year that cover crops were planted on our own farms and we are still learning the right way to handle them. It appears the benefits outweigh the extra cost and hassle of planting and killing these crops. We see them becoming another piece of the conservation practices we need to utilize to support and protect the land we farm. Our grandparents used long rotations that included some years of meadow to achieve better soil tilth and nutrient value for the row crops that followed. So to me cover crops are a way we can incorporate an old farming method

into modern practices. We encourage everyone to visit with our agronomy staff to hear what we are learning and together you can find something that will work on your farms. This practice is also great PR for Iowa agriculture as it is easy for the public to see that these fields have a green carpet in early spring instead of bare dirt that is subject to erosion. The grain markets have been anything but exciting all winter. Corn has traded in a narrow range the last 6 months and it may continue this trend until a weather event forces it to move one way or the other. If planting proceeds at a good clip we will see downward pressure as corn emerges. The next critical point will be pollination time and should we get thru that unscathed the market may start looking for a bottom if farmers start unloading old crop corn. Farmers still hold almost 70 percent of last year's crop so that remains as an anchor on corn prices. However if we see planting delays and then it turns hot and dry this summer we could see a large move higher. Meanwhile the price of soybeans has traded lower the past 4 weeks as we deal with a South America crop that gets bigger as their harvest advances and the trade sees an increase of over 6 million bean acres in the US this spring. The March planting intention report shows farmers planting 90 million acres of corn and 89.5 million acres of beans this year. The last time the

acres were this close was the PIK year of 1983. Data shows that 10 years ago we planted 63 million acres of beans so in 10 years we have increased 27 million acres. Trend line yields have increased in the same period pushing production higher yet. We may not like the trade deficit we have with China but when it comes to bean exports we have to appreciate them. As always you will need to keep one eye on the markets as you plant your crops this spring and be ready to capture an opportunity when it comes along. A 10 or 15 cent bump can make a difference but it is only good if you reward the market. A tier selling program where you sell a portion at each major move in the market can help you spread your marketing risks. We all want home runs but if you always run the count to 3 and 2 your chances of striking out increases tremendously.

I encourage everyone to stay in contact with your SFG salesmen and location managers as we progress thru the spring season. We don't just advertize our motto "service is our specialty" we practice it every day. You can buy products from a number of sources so we want to set ourselves apart from the rest of them by providing the services you need to be profitable.

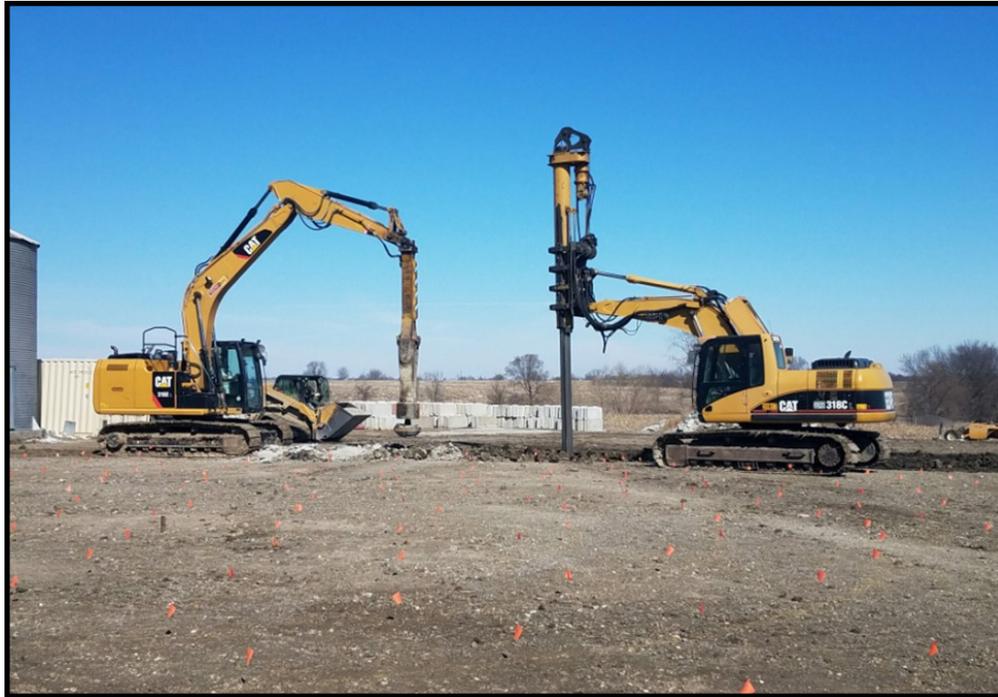
For more articles and market information please visit our website at www.sfgiowa.com

Kyle Smith
Albia Location Manager

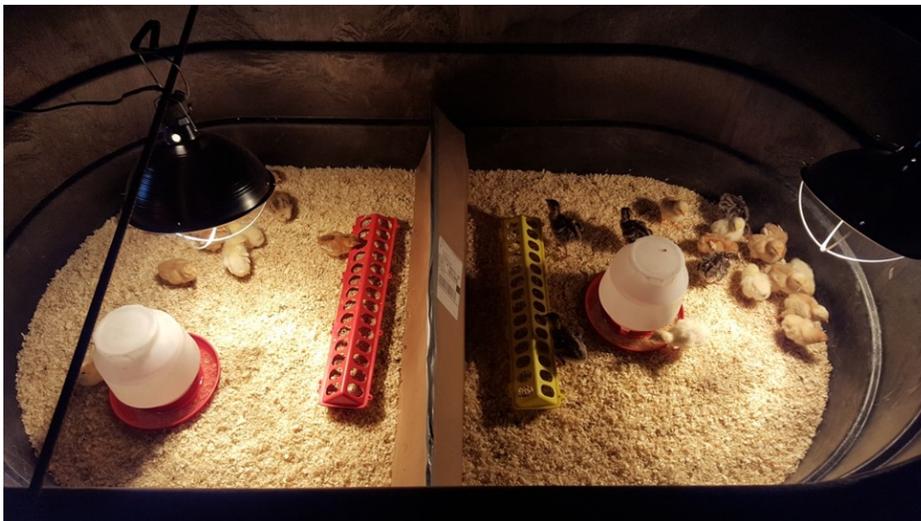


We've dumped a little over 3" from our rain gauge over the last 10 days. The geopiers for the new grain bin are nearing completion despite the setbacks with the weather. You may be wondering what "Geopiers" are as I was a few months ago so I'll give you a brief overview of what we're doing. In order for the ground to support the weight of the bin we had to have 398 holes drilled 12' deep and 30" in diameter. Once the soil is augured out it is replaced with crushed rock. The crushed rock is added in thin layers and is compacted into very dense "lifts" within the drilled hole which expands the hole into the surrounding soil. The compaction creates a cavity or expansion effect that increases the soil strength and bearing capacity as well as reduces soil compressibility.

The weather outlook for this coming week looks to be dry which should allow the geopiers to be completed and for the concrete crews to begin their work.



With the grass starting to green up we'll be switching back to 20% QLF liquid feed within the next few weeks. Contracts are still available for creep feed for those who still need to book additional tons. Please stop in or call us for more information. We also have baby chicks and turkeys available so be sure to bring your kids or grandkids in to see them!



Jason Smith
Centerville Location Manager



Spring is finally here and along with it has come some needed rain. Back in early March it was looking like we were going to have an early spring with all those 70 degree days Taylor and I even joked that we would have all the NH₃ pulled and most of the dry fertilizer on before any spraying would be done. Well we were close. We have about a weeks' worth of application left to do and we will be all but done with the dry and NH₃ work. Chemical spraying is set to start as soon as the ground is fit. The sprayers have been checked over from top to bottom. The flotation tires are on, nozzles have been

checked, calibration has been checked and double checked. Even the computer software has been updated.

Our commitment to quality application service allows you the flexibility to have SFG apply any and all crop inputs that your farm needs, have it done properly and in a timely manner, all to help manage your crop season for success while taking some of the stress off you, the grower. Please give us a call @ 641- 856-2828. Hope everyone has a safe spring!

Iowa CCA Board recognizes the 2017 class of Certified Crop Advisers.

Smith Fertilizer & Grain (SFG) would like to announce that two of our agronomy professionals have voluntarily chosen to enhance their skills and knowledge in the field of agronomy. They have passed two comprehensive exams covering nutrient management, soil and water management, integrated pest management, and crop management. Along with contributing to the agronomic community and gaining the required experience, they have made a commitment to focus on grower profitability while optimizing and protecting our natural resources.

The international Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program is the largest voluntary, agriculturally oriented certification program in North America. Over 13,000 agronomy professionals have met the standards, exams, experience, education, and ethics set by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) to become certified.

The following SFG CCA's have been approved and certified by the Iowa CCA board and will continue to develop their knowledge base for the benefit of you our customer. Certified Crop Advisers always have the latest information on new technology and industry developments.

2017 SFG Certified Crop Advisers:

Taylor Banks	Centerville
Greg Willer	Knoxville

Please, join SFG, the Iowa CCA, and the agricultural community in congratulating Taylor and Greg for becoming members in the 2017 class of Certified Crop Advisers!

Charles Smith
Pleasantville Location Manager



Spring is here in full swing, and all is going well. 50% of the NH₃ is on and about 75% of the dry fertilizer. Soon as it dries up I'm sure the planters will be rolling. We received a little over 4 inches of rain here over the last 2 weeks. The rain couldn't have come any better. Any new seeding or waterways couldn't have asked for a slower rain.

We have been getting our pre and post equipment field ready. That involves

service work and testing all nozzles. Testing nozzles requires checking each one to make sure it has a good pattern and to insure that it is applying correctly. With the hard to kill weeds it's very critical to get the right coverage on the weeds. This is more than beneficial when its go time. We like to put everything away ready to go but we like to do it again just to make sure.

Smith Fertilizer & Grain Inc.
1650 Quebec Street
Knoxville, IA 50138

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US POSTAGE PAID
KNOXVILLE, IA
PERMIT NO. 11

Service is Our Specialty!



Knoxville Location
1650 Quebec St
Knoxville, IA 50138
Office: 641-828-8500
Watts: 800-828-5005

Manager
Mark White
Cell: 641-203-3602
markw@sfgiowa.com

Office Manager
Meghan Pratt
meghanp@sfgiowa.com

Grain Merchandiser
Mark White
Cell: 641-203-3602
markw@sfgiowa.com

Pleasantville Location
702 E. Jasper
Pleasantville, IA 50228
Office: 515-848-5000
Watts: 800-586-5005

Manager
Charles Smith
Cell: 641-891-1449
charless@sfgiowa.com

Office Manager
Jamie Kendrick
jamiek@sfgiowa.com

Albia Location
805 N. Hwy 5
Albia, IA 52531
Office: 641-932-2100
Watts: 877-932-5005

Manager
Kyle Smith
Cell: 641-891-8642
kyle@sfgiowa.com

Office Manager
Kristin Spaulding
kristins@sfgiowa.com

Centerville Location
1605 S. 24th St.
Centerville, IA 52544
Office: 641-856-2828
Watts: 866-856-5303

Manager
Jason Smith
Cell: 641-891-6070
jasons@sfgiowa.com

Office Manager
Sharon Bolin
sharonb@sfgiowa.com

Agronomy Manager

Mark Young C.C.A.
Knoxville office
Office: 641-828-8500
Cell: 641-891-1514

Knoxville Sales

Greg Willer
Cell: 641-891-7457
gregw@sfgiowa.com

Pleasantville Sales

Brad Kaufman C.C.A.
Cell: 641-891-9323
bradk@sfgiowa.com

Centerville Sales

Taylor Banks
Cell: 641-218-0286
taylorb@sfgiowa.com

General Manager

Max Smith
Cell: 641-891-2919
max@sfgiowa.com

Administration Manager

Sharon Smith
Cell: 641-891-8616
Sharon@sfgiowa.com

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