

# SFG Update

Smith Fertilizer & Grain

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**Mark White**

**Knoxville**

**Location manager**



A hot grain market would sure help take the extreme chill out of the air. Right now the markets seem to be having trouble getting up to luke warm, so you begin to wonder if we will have to wait for the temperature to increase so we can get that warm feeling. We have seen a small corn rally the last 10 days as we have put about 18 cents on the March contract. We might be in the middle of

the 20 to 40 cent rally that many believed was possible. However a weaker basis has slowed the cash increase. We think this will continue to happen if the board works higher. The end users know that there is still a lot of farmer owned corn and in some areas there is still wet corn sitting in bins that will have to move in the next 45 days. If you have some of this wet corn, you should check it as we continue to hear of bins that have gone way out of condition. It is tough enough to sell corn in the low 4's; you don't want to add a dollar or more discount to it.

Old crop beans have rallied a bit more and today they act like we might take a stab at 13.00 cash. China has not cancelled as many shipments as the trade ex-

pected once the South American crop started moving. This could happen any day once they are done celebrating their new year this week. Farmers hold a much smaller percentage of the bean stocks as many have already cashed them in. Many times once the producer gives up ownership we see better prices as the commercials can manipulate the supply easier when they own a majority of the stocks. Cold weather has helped meal demand and with the increased soy oil demand the processors are crushing at full speed. New crop beans seem stuck in the 10.50 to 10.70 range. Additional upward movement may be difficult to achieve unless the projected acres change.

As many of you know, we

are in the deicing business and the winter weather has kept us very busy delivering product throughout the Midwest. Several products including road salt are getting more difficult to find. The states to the south of us have had several events that may look small to us but with their limited equipment can cause them a lot of grief. This week I spoke with a person in the Branson street department about an order they had placed. He said, "They were in the middle of blizzard." I asked him how much snow they were expecting and he replied, "At least an inch." I told him they were forecasting 6 to 8 inches for us, but it wasn't that big of a deal as it was winter in Iowa. I guess it shows how 400 miles can change one's outlook when it comes to winter weather.

**Kyle Smith**  
**Albia Location Manager**



SFG is proud to announce that we have now hired two feed sales people, Jessica Lutz and Cole Young. This first month they'll both work primarily out of Albia to get accustomed to helping at the counter, then we'll split them up. Jessica will work from Albia south, and Cole will work from Albia north. They're both eager to learn and will be happy to help you however they can moving forward!

In order to minimize the possibility of feed contamination we are implementing the following policies. Kent and Hubbard feeds specialists have encouraged us to flush all feed trucks with a non-medicated feed between batches to eliminate any possible cross contamination between products on our delivery trucks. The best solution we have come up with is to flush all loads with 50 pounds of ground corn. Starting this week SFG will flush all batches of feed with 50 pounds of ground corn. It will be dumped in the front of the horizontal auger in the floor of the feed truck. This will empty all of the batch of feed from the feed compartment being unloaded into your feeder, wagon or bin. When SFG delivers feed to you, the first feed to come out of the unloading auger will contain some ground corn that is contamination free from the previous batch of feed

unloaded.

If at any time this small inclusion of ground corn is a detriment to your feed program the delivery person will (if properly informed) unload the first flush of ground corn into a predetermined area to meet your needs. If nothing is said, we will always put the ground corn flush into your feeder. Our purpose is to provide better quality assurance with the intended delivered products to be contaminate free. The cost of the ground corn will be added to the cost of the feed on a per batch basis. One bag will be charged per batch of feed unloaded no matter what the size of the batch.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please contact myself at 641-891-8642, and I will be happy to assist you. Stay warm!

## Taylor Banks Agronomy Sales



With the increasing problems we face controlling herbicide resistant weeds, it is important to think of the herbicide modes of action when putting together a chemical program for the season. It is a good idea to use no less than 5 modes of action in a weed control program, and the more modes used the better chance at having an effective weed control program. Where we often get in trouble is when we use herbicides with different names that may be labeled for two different growing stages of the crop but use the same mode of action. This is simple to do with the ALS (Group 2) products since they have been used for a rela-

tively long time and there are a lot of them on the market today. Take Autumn and FirstRate for example, both are Group 2 ALS products, but they are labeled for different application times and even though they are to be used at different times they are still the same chemistry. An important thing to remember is if we are having trouble with resistant weeds such as marestail, waterhemp, or giant ragweed they may be resistant to more than one herbicide class and multiple modes is our only defense against them. When I put together a chemical program I like to look at three key areas: residual control, grass control, and broadleaf control. With the problem we have with resistance today it is nearly impossible for one product to fit these three areas and have acceptable control. Pre emerge and post emerge residual chemical products such as Authority, Matador, Sonic, and Warrant are our best tools today to keep resistant weeds out of our fields when they are incorporated with an effective spring burn down program. Matador for example has Dual (Group 15), Pursuit (Group 2), and Sencor (Group 5) making it a chemistry with

three modes of action. Add Matador to your spring burndown program with Roundup (Group 9) and 2-4-D (Group 4) you are going out to the field with 5 modes of action in one pass. The main goal of growers and agronomists is to start with a clean field and keep it clean throughout the growing season into harvest. This is still possible with the proper planning and scouting of fields so the right product is used to fit that specific situation. I encourage anyone with questions about herbicides and their modes of action to contact their local SFG agronomist to discuss different herbicides in order to put together the right chemical program for your field needs.



"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."-Anne Bradstreet, *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*

## Mark Young Senior Agronomy Manager



Plants need phosphorus. It is a nutrient required in relatively large amounts by plants. Plants need phosphorus for growth, utilization of sugar and starch, photosynthesis, and for the formation of albumen fat and the nucleus. Phosphorus compounds are involved in the transfer and storage of energy within plants. Energy from photosynthesis and the metabolism of carbohydrates is stored in phosphate compounds for later use in growth production.

Phosphorus is readily translocated within the plants moving from older to younger tissues as the plant forms cells and develops roots, leaves and a stem.

Adequate phosphorus results in rapid

growth and earlier maturity, which is important in areas where frost is a concern. Frequently, the quality of vegetative growth is improved.

A good supply of phosphorus has been associated with increased root growth, which means the plant can explore more soil for nutrients and moisture. Phosphorus occurs in most plants in concentrations between .1 and .4 percent. A deficiency of phosphorus will slow overall plant growth.

Phosphorus requirements for optimum yields vary with different crops.

A mild phosphorus deficiency results in somewhat stunted crop growth, which cannot always be seen. The early symptoms of severe phosphorus deficiency are purpling and/or browning of the lower leaves and base of stem, then traveling upward on the plant. Have your SFG agronomist show you that the effect is first evident at the leaf tip and then progresses toward the base. Eventually, the leaf tip dies.

Symptoms are most pronounced in young plants because their rapid growth creates greater demands on the available supply. Crops seldom completely outgrow a phos-

phorus deficiency; the symptoms usually persist to delay maturity.

The term "plant available soil phosphorus" is used by SFG agronomists to indicate the portion of soil phosphorus that can be used for crop growth. It also refers to the portion of the soil phosphorus removed by various methods in soil testing laboratories.

Remember that soil tests cannot predict with 100 percent accuracy when crops will respond to added phosphate fertilizer. The frequency of crop response to added phosphate fertilizer can be strongly influenced by environmental conditions, particularly soil temperature and moisture. Therefore, you can expect greater crop response to phosphate fertilizer in a year with wetter, cooler spring conditions than in a year with warmer, drier conditions.

Most importantly, sample soils and follow recommendations from your SFG agronomist. It all comes down to yield.

## Greg Willer Agronomy Sales



In a short few months we will be very busy working in the fields. There are still many things that need to get done before the 2014 growing season gets under way. There are numerous growers out there that have not booked their ni-

trogen needs. With the way this winter has been, it will not be surprising if there is a short window to apply nitrogen this spring. SFG supergrow is a good option for your nitrogen needs as it can be applied anytime.

There are many nice features that make supergrow an efficient source of nitrogen. Supergrow can be applied on frozen ground, leaving one less thing to be applied in the spring. It is also not susceptible to volatility like other nitrogen sources. Supergrow has a 7-5-1-4 analysis, so you will not only be getting nitrogen but some phosphorus, potassium, and sulfur. One ton of supergrow will get you 140 units of nitrogen, 10 pounds of

phosphorus, twenty pounds of potassium, and eighty pounds of sulfur. Supergrow is professionally applied by floaters that leave minimal compaction.

Supergrow is also a very good product for pasture ground. A half rate is generally used once the snow comes off the ground in late winter or very early spring. The main deficiencies in pasture ground are water and nitrogen. We can not do anything to change the weather, but we can add nitrogen to our pasture grounds to give them an early boost before cattle are turned out to graze. If you have any questions on supergrow for your pasture or crop ground give your SFG agronomist a call.



SFG is offering the following feed specials until 2/28/14- Take advantage of these specials!

\$20 off per ton of Crystalyx tubs (1 ton minimum)

\$1.00 off per bag of dog/cat food (10 bag minimum)

\$2.00 off Kent Energlass 250lb tubs



**For more articles and market information please visit our website at [www.sfgiowa.com](http://www.sfgiowa.com).**

## Brad Kaufman Agronomy Sales



With Roundup's effectiveness in question from here forward what is the best way to control weeds, especially waterhemp? Most everyone is using a pre emergent chemical on their crop ground, and if you are not you should be. The pre emergent chemicals are helping to reduce the weed populations that we have to control with our post application. Some are even using products on post passes that give "extended" residual. This is what farmers in Southern U.S. are doing to control Palmer Amaranth. So what is the most effective way to control weeds? I'll give my opinion on what I think we should be doing.

We need to start strong. Use full rates of pre emergent chemicals and multiple modes of actions. I like running 3 pints of Matador as early as we can get in the field, first week of April. I visited with our BASF representative about putting 1

oz of Zidua with the Matador to get another mode of action and long lasting residual. I'm sure a lot of you have heard of a product called Fierce, which is Valor and Zidua. This product is being used to help control Palmer down south and they are having good success with it. However, it is pretty expensive and I believe that if we can put that 1 oz of Zidua with the 3 pints of Matador we are going to essentially make our own Fierce for less money per acre. Zidua is in limited supply this year so I am using this program on some of my more troublesome acres and hope to have some promising results to share this fall.

What should our post plans be? I think we need to consider leaving the Roundup out of the tank when we go over the field the second time, especially on beans. Basically Roundup is going to be killing the grass in the field and Matador, at the 3 pint rate does a very good job eliminating any foxtail issues in the field. I think we need to post apply Cobra and Flexstar not letting the waterhemp get taller than a pop can. Using Cobra alone is not any more expensive than using a full labeled rate of Roundup, and if sprayed early enough it can be more effective than Roundup. I know in talking to many of you we don't like to see the beans "burnt" the way Cobra does, but using foliar fertilizers, such as Awaken will help the

plants recover faster and give a yield kick. We have to ask ourselves which would we rather deal with, "burning" the beans for a week or looking at waterhemp in our fields all season and running them through the combine?

What about the "extended" residuals? The theory sounds good- put another product out there to help on late season flushes of weeds. However, each and every one of these products is dependant on moisture and most generally what happens to the rain when we are posting beans? It generally shuts off and reduces the effectiveness of these products. That is why I am intrigued by adding 1 oz. of Zidua with Matador pre emerge because we will have moisture early to keep all active ingredients in both products going to help eliminate weed problems.

Hopefully, I have helped a little in making your chemical decisions for this coming year. We all have to remember that scouting is going to be essential and timely applications are going to be a must. We can identify a seedling waterhemp emerge on a Monday and by that Friday, more than likely, it is going to be too tall to control with any herbicide.