

# SFG Update

Smith Fertilizer & Grain

November 9, 2012

## Max Smith General Manager



Harvest has come and gone providing good weather conditions to harvest crops. Yields have been all over the place. Most people are happy with what they received considering the weather conditions we endured. As I write this article today, we are getting some light rain. We still lack ways of recharging our soil for next

year's crop. Where terraces are being built it doesn't take too long to get down to dry soil. I encourage and applaud all of you who are cleaning fence rows out and building new conservation practices on your land. I am reminded often that we cannot make more land and need to take of what we have to the best of our ability before we hand it off to the next generation. Let's all do our part.

We are busy applying Nh3, Lime, Super Grow, hauling corn and beans, and have two trucks hauling feed most days of the week. Soil tests are coming back daily and we are adding them to the winter to do list. At this time prices are stable. Nh3 looks to be higher next spring but not much activity to purchase product to date. More to come on this in the

weeks ahead. We will have 3 custom NH3 bars running this fall. Get your name on the list if you want us to apply Nh3 for you. Considering we had an early fall, looks like we will have an early winter as well.

We still have time to pull soil tests. This is essential with the cost of fertilizer. Call our staff if you have not turned in all your acres to test this year. They have good details of what part of the 4 year cycle your land is at.

The Knoxville office is being remodeled and should be completed by December 1st. Everything takes longer than you expect when you do remodeling. This one has not been an exception. We are excited to make some changes and look

forward to having quieter work areas. We are planning an open house in December when the office is completed.

Grain movement has been brisk as markets are at good marketing opportunities. We are scheduling a marketing meeting this winter at each location. Talk to your location manager for details.

Thanks for your business this fall. We do appreciate it. Our focus in the office is to "Raise the Bar" on ourselves to do a better job with everything we do. We strive for perfection and will do everything we can to get better equipped to keep you profitable in the years to come.

Max Smith  
General Manager



Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Smith Fertilizer & Grain!



## Mark White Knoxville Location



Harvest is all but over in our part of the country. Most of the market news is old news as the fundamentals remain the same as the short corn and soybean crop will tighten supplies in the coming marketing year. We are seeing some signs of rationing on the corn side. A

handful of ethanol plants have used up their contracted corn and are shutting down until the returns are more profitable. As consumers we want cheap fuel but that in turn will take a bit out of the corn market. There has also been some corn shipments come into the southeast US from South America. The hog company doing the importing has been a strong opponent of corn for fuel for the past 2 years as it has increased their cost of production. However this same company profited for years buying cheap corn that was subsidized by the government, which means you and I subsidized their price of corn.

Soybeans may have a brighter future as the current world sup-

ply is here in the United States and everyone knows the current demand may out pace the available supply. Today all eyes are on the South American weather. They expect to plant and harvest a record crop in the coming year. If predictions hold true, Brazil will replace the United States as the largest soybean producer in the world. This is all built on normal weather patterns and any hiccup in their crop production could move prices higher. China remains a huge customer for soy products and this does not look to change anytime soon. The Chinese government is talking of relaxing the one child per couple rule. Think of the future demand this would create as their population

would increase even faster.

SFG is gearing up to help you take your grain marketing to the next level. On November 14th we will have meetings at all 4 locations to discuss ideas we have and to gain input from you, the customer about what you need from us to help you be more profitable. The schedule for the day will be Pleasantville at 7:30, Knoxville at 10:00, Albia at 12:30, and Centerville at 3:00. These will be short hour and a half meetings where we can have an open discussion on what will benefit you the most. Please contact myself, Gary Sterling or your local manager for more information.

**Natasha Sadofsky**  
**Albia Location Manager**



.It's the time of year when everyone is starting to work cattle for one reason or another (weaning, preg checking, vaccinating, etc.). Having cattle in the squeeze

chute is also a great time to deworm them. Internal parasites can cause damage to an animals' digestive system, disrupt nutrient digestion, lower the animals' immune response, reduce feed intake and growth rate, the list could go on and on. Strategic deworming can result in improved weaning and conception weights, heavier stocker cattle and dairy heifers at the end of grazing season, and reduced egg shedding results in cleaner pastures.

It's also that time of year when everyone is thinking about show stock for 4-H and FFA activities. SFG will finance feed purchased for 4-H and FFA livestock pro-

jects at 0% interest for the following terms: Beef: December 1, 2012 through August 15, 2013; Swine & Sheep: March 1, 2013 through August 15, 2013. Students are eligible to receive the 5% cash discount with this program. Please see a SFG representative for more details on this program.

We have feeders available for rent and are still offering the opportunity to contract your feed needs with a 15% down payment to lock in the price

Contact me at the Albia SFG office to discuss the line of Safe-Guard® products we carry.

**2013 4-H & FFA Agreement:**

SFG will finance feed purchased for 4-H and FFA livestock projects at **0% interest** for the following terms:

**Beef:** December 1, 2012 through August 15, 2013

**Swine & Sheep:** March 1, 2013 through August 15, 2013

Students are eligible to receive the 5% cash discount.

Contact Smith Fertilizer and Grain for details!

**Mark Young**  
**Senior Agronomy Manager**



Part of a good fertility program calls for maintaining soil fertility to replace nutrients removed at harvest. This practice maintains the fertility at the level you started with, which is also referred to as "maintenance fertilizer application." Fertilizer sales and use figures would indicate that, over the last ten years, farmers have not applied enough fertilizer to make up for what was removed at harvest, however. This was particularly true in 2012, and was only possible because, until the early 1990s, healthy inventories of potash were built up in the soil. Now is a good time to reverse the unsustainable trend.

In addition to applying maintenance rates of fertilizer, you might also consider building fertility in some fields. The table below contains the familiar nutrient removal

values that different crops remove at harvest.

<u>Nutrient Removal</u>		
<u>Values</u>		
<u>Crop</u>	<u>P2O</u>	<u>K2O</u>
<u>Corn (lbs/bu)</u>	<u>0.44</u>	<u>0.29</u>
<u>Soybeans (lbs/bu)</u>	<u>0.80</u>	<u>1.40</u>
	<u>15.0</u>	
<u>Alfalfa (lbs/ton)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>60.00</u>
<u>Wheat (lbs/bu)</u>	<u>0.55</u>	<u>0.34</u>

This is a simple but very useful tool to use to estimate the amount of nutrients removed at harvest. Just multiply the nutrient removal per bushel/weight by the number of bushels or weight harvested. With this data in hand your SFG agronomist will have valuable information needed to custom blend the fertilizer that will replace the removed nutrients. With variable rate application available at SFG, this technology can be used to apply the specific nutrients in relation to where they were removed in the field.

The ideal situation for crop production is to build soil fertility to high soil levels, if at all possible. The first benefit of this is that at high phosphorus and potassium soil test levels we seldom have to wonder or worry

if the major nutrients are limiting yields. Even if those values are higher than necessary, it is still like money in the bank. The second benefit of having high soil fertility is that it can help save money by showing you where you can cut costs without losing yield.

Building to high P and K levels also gives you more options for maintaining a successful program. At high fertility, timing, placement, and absolute amounts of fertilizer have less effect on the crop. High fertility gives you options on how to manage your fertilizer applications. However, when soil fertility programs are maintained on the edge of the critical level, when and how fertilizer is applied can be very important. In this situation, the crop is dependent on the immediate fertility program.

With the approach of the fall fertilizer season, it is time to decide whether the maintenance or the build approach is most appropriate. Obviously, if the soils are already high, the maintenance approach to fertility is ideal. There is a high penalty for having low soil fertility, and the penalty will get only greater as yield potential increases. We cannot lose ground now, contact your SFG agronomist and get your fall fertilizer program prepared.

### **Corey Garrington** Agronomy Sales



We are once again at the end of the growing season and planning for the next. Plans will likely include applying phosphorus and potassium. Whether you need

to apply either of these will depend in part on your soil test results. A soil test is a process by which elements are chemically removed from the soil and measured for the availability to be taken up by the plant. A soil test also measures soil pH levels. Obtaining accurate information through soil testing is critical to ensuring that you do not limit the yield potential of the crop and that we can help make you the most profitable management decisions.

Fall is by far the best time to take soil samples. During the fall you have more time to sample properly than in the spring. After your results come back you have to re-

search options and make plans for next year. These plans may include early ordering of fertilizer. Soil and weather conditions are often better for sampling in the fall as well.

Fall is also the ideal time for dry fertilizer application. It offers you a bigger window of application timing. This means you can wait for ideal field conditions to spread which helps with reducing compaction issues. Fall application gives you the ability to be ready to plant or do field work first thing in the spring. If you have any questions please contact your SFG Agronomy Salesman.

## **Your Invited to:**

### **2012 SFG Winter Conference** **“Utilizing Technology to Raise the Bar”**

**Where:** Marion County Extension Office, Knoxville, Iowa

**When:** Thursday, December 6. 9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

**Topics:** Grain Marketing, Weed Resistance, Nutritionals, Drought, New technology, and more!

### **Brad Kaufman** Agronomy Sales



It's that time of the year again; time to start planning seed orders for next year. The DeKalb and Asgrow first deadline, November 15, is quickly approaching. I would like to explain the trait packages in the corn. DeKalb has VT3, VT3P, VT2P, and Smart Stax. The VT3 is what we are familiar with the corn borer and rootworm, but the others may not be so familiar. All of these trait packages, except the VT3, will be refuge in a bag this year.

The VT3P, Triple Pro, will give the customer corn borer, rootworm, earworm, and army worm protection. The earworm pro-

tection, the past two seasons, has worked very well. We have had high earworm populations infest corn fields after pollination, the past two growing seasons. Earworms will burrow into the husk and feed on the pollinated ear. This year especially, was a huge problem because of the ear molds and aflatoxin. Wherever an earworm injured any of the kernels on the plant, that is was where mold grew, but in fields where we had the Triple Pro corn hybrids we had few issues with earworm damage. Triple Pro will be 10% refuge in a bag this year. Some of the VT3P hybrids that I like are 61-88, 62-97, and 64-69.

VT2P, Double Pro is similar to the Triple Pro. The only thing we lack on Double Pro is rootworm protection. In this area we usually don't have to worry about corn rootworm damage, especially in rotated ground, once again this year was the exception. The previous two years we have had very wet springs which reduced the rootworm numbers significantly, but this year they had perfect hatching conditions and we saw rootworm numbers we have not

seen in this area. With that being said I saw few issues from rootworm damage in the Double Pro. Double Pro will be 5% refuge in a bag this year. Some of the VT2P hybrids that I like are 61-49, 62-98, and 63-87.

Finally, Smart Stax. This gives protection against all the pests mentioned before, plus Western bean cutworm and Black cutworm. With the original release of DeKalb's Smart Stax corn they had poor results, which they later found that not all hybrids will respond well to the introduction of Herculex. I had several side by sides, in plots, this year testing the original trait against the Smart Stax version. In most cases the Smart Stax out yielded the previous trait. DeKalb took 59-35 VT3 and 62-09 VT3P and moved them to Smart Stax this year, 59-37 and 62-08 respectively.

Hopefully this helps clarify some of the traits. If you have questions and/or want to get your order in call your SFG agronomist.