

SFG Update

Smith Fertilizer & Grain

September 13, 2012

Knoxville Office Addition

Max Smith General Manager



The summer heat has come and gone. Harvest is upon us without a "late summer" to enjoy or prepare as we normally do. Seems like every year we see something new that we have never seen before, 2012 has left marks on all of us. We received corn directly from the combine this morning that tested 14.2% moisture. That has never happened on September 10th and I doubt it ever will again. Our test plot at Knoxville averaged 160 bushels and Albia's office plot averaged 130 at the office plot. Keep in mind these are

well managed plots with no waterways to contend with. Just today at the Knoxville Elevator we received whole field averages from 89 to 160 bushels of #2 corn within 3 miles of each other. This is better than we thought a few weeks ago. In the Knoxville area beans are still too early to tell. Today at Centerville they are starting to harvest soybeans. Early checks are around 20 bushel per acre. The scattered rainfall this summer is definitely showing up in whole field averages.

We are finishing last summer's maintenance projects. Usually we have this done by September but harvest has interrupted that process. Most things are in place but still have some equipment to finish up for fall fertilizer application. We are on schedule to have everything ready for all your fall needs. We have built a new storage tank at Knoxville for liquid fertilizer storage. It will hold 600,000 gallon and will be completed next week. It will be painted yet and filled in Oc-



tober. Shannon Dykstra, the Knoxville Office Receptionist (pictured left), is heading up the safety department while we undergo construction! We are adding a 3rd level to our office, a new conference room, and management will move upstairs in weeks ahead.

tober.

Knoxville is building a new addition on the office. We apologize for the disruption. This project was to be done by now but we could not get construction materials until this past week. I hear on TV how bad the economy is but when we want to buy something we have to wait for availability on many things. Maybe I should quit watching TV!

Our staff is utilizing continuing education to keep on top of

changes from feed rations to seed selection for this coming season. Based on early results they have helped us pick the right hybrids to yield with little rainfall. It is important you work with our staff as the focus of their work is to assist you in making decisions for profitability.

We hope you have a safe and fun harvest.

Sincerely,

Max Smith
General Manager

Mark White Knoxville Location Manager



Corn harvest is underway at Knoxville with the shorter season varieties coming in at 15 to 18 percent moisture. The good surprise has been the test weights are in the upper 50's which is much better than we feared. Yields vary throughout the field. The good black soils are yielding decent for the weather we have had this sea-

son, but yields are really falling off when we get into the lighter soils.

With harvest starting early we have had several producers ask if we will take contracted grain early. This year we will accept all October and first half November contracts that were made prior to August 15th early without penalty on any grain that is delivered to a SFG elevator. We will not pay for this grain until the contract period. Your elevator managers can give you the payment schedule. Grain that is priced farm pickup will be handled differently as it was priced for us to direct ship to the terminals and if we pick it up early we may not be able to deliver at that time. If any of this grain is delivered more than

30 days before payment we will do a deferred payment contract as we are required to settle all grain within 30 days of delivery. This can be deferred to the contract period or if you need we can defer payment to January 4, 2013. Deferred payment is a great way to take advantage of good fall delivery prices and take the income in 2013. Please keep us informed if you need to do this. We need to know this before we settle your grain so the proper paperwork is done. At this time all our drying and storage rates will be the same as last year. Our harvest policy is posted at all locations and on our website at www.sfgiowa.com/grain.

Aflatoxin has been in the news and on all of our minds this season. We have purchased equip-

ment so we can pinpoint how many parts per billion any suspect sample contains. To date we have had very few samples exceed what we will buy the corn at without dock. We have a discount schedule for corn that tests above 15 ppb. We will segregate this corn and ship it to a terminal that will accept it at a discounted price. Just for reference I did the math and 1 part per billion in a 1000 bushel truck is 8% of one kernel. Just goes to show how small this amount is. The best advice I can give you is to contact your crop insurance agent before you begin any corn harvesting. There are hoops you must jump through to protect yourself if aflatoxin is found in your corn. This applies to both farm stored corn and corn you deliver to an elevator.

Natasha Sadofsky **Albia Location Manager**



It is that time of year again to wean calves. This is particularly important under these hot, dry conditions to help minimize stress on your calves. Overstressed calves can lead to erratic feeding habits, weight loss,

and lowered disease resistance. At SFG we offer a number of different products to help alleviate potential issues with weaning.

Creep fed calves go on feed much easier after weaning than those that have not been exposed to feed. We sell creep feed that is medicated to help with feed efficiency and control coccidiosis. We offer a number of different products to help minimize potential issues with weaning: De-cox helps control scours; CTC controls respiratory infections; and AS700 helps control both scours and respiratory infections. We also have Crystalyx Brigade

tubs that offer an all natural solution to help with stress. They contain an all natural plant protein, electrolytes, high vitamin and trace mineral content which are ideal for animals under stress, breeding stock, young calves, and show cattle.

We are still offering the option to lock your creep price in through the end of the year with 15% down as supplies last. Our September mineral promotion is also a good time to stock up on mineral. Certain varieties of Kent's mineral are buy 10, get the 11th free. Hubbard mineral is \$25 off per ton when you buy 2 ton or more. Stop at your SFG office for more information.

Mark Young **Senior Agronomy Manager**



This year crop production has been reduced because of dry conditions. Here are a few items you and your SFG agronomist should consider when planning for next year's crop.

One, with severely damaged crops and low yields you might credit some of the phosphorus and potassium applied for this year's crop to next year, as much less removal will occur in grain harvest of the lower than expected yield. However, if drought damaged corn was harvested for silage instead of planned grain harvest, then phosphorus and potassium removal may not be much different than planned because of greater removal with the plant foliage. Estimates of nutrient removal for drought damaged crops should be checked against actual applications to see if it is feasible to account for phosphorus and potassium toward the next crop.

Two, when collecting samples this fall for soil testing, watch the soil sampling depth. It can be difficult to sample to the recommended 6 inch depth when soils are dry and hard. Shallow sampling will result in incorrect results and recommendations. This will impact your fertilizer management in the years following a drought. Uneven yields across your fields also means uneven fertility usage across your fields, now is the most opportune time to grid sample your fields. It is important to determine the correct levels of these nutrients through soil tests, so SFG can properly develop the correct fertilizer program based on anticipated yields and the crops you grow.

For more articles, markets, and SFG specials please visit our website at www.sfgiowa.com.

Jerry Don Johnson **Agronomy Sales**



Fall season is a common time for making nutrient applications. With harvest getting under way it is time to get in touch with your SFG agronomist and make arrangements to pull fall soil samples. Grid sampling is the preferred way to understand the soils ability to supply phosphorous and potassium for crop productions. Having multiple test results per field aids in determining uniform application rates and accommodates site-specific fertilizer and lime application.

Fall is historically the time to apply P and K. According to Iowa State University there are many reasons for this, including: time, workload, typically dry soils, available fertilizers and application before fall tillage. Fall P and K application works well in Iowa soil conditions because the soil has little or no "fixing capacity" so P and K applied in the fall is equally available for the next year's crop as a spring application (or even for multiple years).

According to ongoing research, fall application can also be advantageous for environmental issues related to P. Historically there are fewer large rainfalls in the fall therefore there is less risk of runoff to fall applied P. The small rainfalls that do occur in the fall will help P interactions with the soil. In the event of a large rainfall, earlier small rains and fall tillage greatly reduce the risk of runoff.

Until last fall most growers had not pulled soil samples for some time due to the

weather. Last fall we pulled a record number of grid samples. We applied lime to most of the acres we grid sampled. Most field crops perform best at a soil pH between 6.0 and 6.8. Soil pH measures the level of acidity of the soil, the lower the pH the more acidic the soil. For the soils in Iowa, pH levels for corn and soybean production should be above 6.0 for optimal crop growth. Research has shown that soil pH less than 6.0 can decrease crop yields. When soil pH is below this range some nutrients become less available. With continuous cropping, soil pH can decrease because of various factors, including crop removal, application of ammonia-based nitrogen fertilizers, and organic matter decomposition. Adding lime can raise soil pH to the desired level and increase crop yields. Even with the drought, I feel the lime applied last fall has paid off in the beans this year.

Contact your SFG agronomist to discuss the benefits of grid sampling.

Corey Garrington Agronomy Sales



As the combines start to roll through the fields we are seeing how the drought has affected not only corn yields but grain quality. With corn yields varying consid-

erably throughout the field GPS applications will be extremely important. Utilizing variable rate fertilizers can cut back on fertilizer costs.

Another beneficial tool to incorporate along with this is soil sampling. This helps you have the ability to incorporate variable rate fertilizers to improve yields. There are costs associated with the soil sampling, but if the samples are done correctly they can save you money in the long run. For example, if you use conventional soil testing which requires taking only a couple of samples per field and then get a recommendation for an application of a fertilizer or lime that is high, it is going to have a

high cost of inputs. Whereas if you use grid sampling, you can pin point specific areas that are either low or high in fertility, and fertilizer adjustments can be made accordingly. The use of variable rate fertilizers not only cuts the cost, but it can also reduce environmental concerns with the minimum amount of fertilizers applied to the soil.

Now is a good time to be talking to your SFG agronomist about your fall fertilizer needs to improve future corn crops. Remember, this fall as the combines roll through the fields, safety is the first priority in any job. Have a safe and successful harvest.

Troy Jensen Knoxville Agronomy Manager



My name is Troy Jensen, I am the new agronomy site manager for the Knoxville location. I live in Melcher-Dallas with

my wife Melissa and our son, who is a sophomore at Melcher-Dallas, and I also have 3 grown daughters to round out my immediate family. My wife and I enjoy spending time with friends and family, whether that's at our local high school sports event, or out riding our motorcycle, or entertaining at our home.

My work experiences lie in manufacturing and management, I spent 20 years working in manufacturing at Pella Corp. and most recently 4 years as the transportation and maintenance director for the Melcher-Dallas Community School District where I managed both departments.

Since starting with SFG I have been working with the agronomy department, learning scouting techniques, plant growth stages, weed, insect, disease, fungus identification, nutrient deficiencies and the proper use and application rates of pesticides and fertilizers. I have attended several seed meetings to familiarize myself with the different traits and characteristics in both corn and soybeans from Monsanto and Syngenta. I look forward to the educational opportunities ahead and the opportunity to help you with your farming operation needs.

Brad Kaufman Agronomy Sales



With this year's dry conditions, we have had to deal with things we have not faced for quite a few years such as spider mites. We have to start thinking about next year's crop and the chemicals we applied this year. Many times we don't have to worry about chemical carry over from year to year and the potential to injure next year's crop, but this year has been so dry that it may be a possibility.

What determines if a chemical will carry over and possibly injure next year's crop? Chemical half-life is how fast the chemical

will break down. The rate of herbicide applied and when it was applied. Soil characteristics such as texture, organic matter, and soil pH also have an effect on how fast chemicals will breakdown. For example, some chemicals have a longer half-life if the pH of the soil is too high or too low. Rainfall amount and when we got rain during the growing season, this year there hasn't been much rain. How sensitive next year's crop is to the herbicide that was used this year. Finally what will the growing conditions be like next Spring. The half-life and rate of chemical used have the greatest impact on chemical degradation.

Only a few chemicals have the characteristics that may lead to carryover issues for next year. Iowa State put out a list and you can see if any of the chemicals you used this year are on the list.

High Risk

- Atrazine (numerous products)
- Chlorimuron (Authority XL, Canopy, Envive, Valor XLT, others)

- Imazaquin (Scepter)
- Simazine (Princep, others)

Moderate to Slight Risk

- Fomesafen (Reflex, Flexstar, Prefix)
- Clopyralid (Hornet)
- Cloransulam (FirstRate, Hornet, Gauntlet, etc.)
- Imazethapyr (Pursuit)

Dinitroanilines

- Pendimethalin (Prowl, others)
- Trifluralin (Treflan, others)

HPPD Inhibitors

- Isoxaflutole (Balance Flexx)
- Mesotrione (Callisto, Lumax, Lexar)
- Tembotrione (Laudis, Capreno)
- Topramezone (Impact)

In conclusion, to minimize any possible carryover risks we need to evaluate our herbicide programs this year and see if we need to make any changes to our plans for next growing season.