As crops are beginning to head into the homestretch toward harvest, we can look back and begin to evaluate product performance. We were fortunate to have adequate moisture in many areas this spring, and our soybean pre herbicides worked really well under those conditions. This is one more year of evidence to support the importance of a good pre-plant/pre-emergence herbicide program.

Along that same line, Roundup Ready 2 Xtend® soybeans are cleared for planting and export to both the Chinese and European markets, but we are still awaiting EPA approval on the use of dicamba herbicide over the crop. When that approval is granted, you’re still going to want to use a pre product with the Xtend system to maximize the efficacy of the chemistry.

Focus on fall

Turning our attention to fall, the season provides a great opportunity to get your P and K applied before spring. If this is a year to resample your soil, we would like to get into your fields as soon as you get the crop out. That’s one more reason why we’d like to sit down with you before the rush of harvest to put a plan together for this fall and next spring. That way we’ll be better able to get all the necessary acres sampled and applied before winter sets in.

Our chisel plow will be active this fall and we also have strip tilling capability. If we’re fall seeding alfalfa for you, we want to have that in the ground by Sept. 15 to avoid dormant seeding and ensure that the plants get underway and form some good, healthy crowns. Existing alfalfa acres will also benefit from fall application of P and K.

Fall is an excellent time to apply a burndown treatment on minimum-till and no-till acres to fight tough-to-control winter annuals like marestail, kochia and dandelions.

In conclusion, we wanted to mention a couple of personnel changes on the operations side. Kyle Krause is now the assistant location manager at Watertown agronomy, and Dustin Zemlicka has moved into the dispatch role.

We appreciate your business, and look forward to working with you this fall to prepare your fields and put together your plans for 2017.
This is one of those years where the big picture looks different than the local snapshot. The trade is telling us that we have a bumper crop in the making in the U.S., with crop ratings higher than average at this point in the growing season.

Locally, though, that isn’t necessarily the case, depending on where scattered rains have fallen. Many of you are experiencing some pretty tough conditions, particularly north of Watertown, where I’ve heard rumblings that there are lots of small-grain acres that were baled for feed.

Fortunately, we did see prices for both corn and beans rally in late spring and early summer. Many of you did take advantage of that move, selling some new crop beans and moving a fair amount of old crop corn. Since that time, of course, the soybeans that went up $3 have come back down $2.

Looking ahead, my thoughts on the market probably match the mood in the country. With highly rated corn and bean crops in the field, we’re not likely to see that rally we were hoping for. Large stocks here in the U.S. and worldwide continue to weigh on commodity prices, particularly wheat.

Regarding area wheat, I believe the protein level of the wheat we’re seeing will be just under 15%, which is pretty incredible. Like the weather, both yields and protein levels have been highly variable, ranging from 20 to 80 bushels and from 12% to 20% on protein.

Soybean exports have held their own, and we continue to move grain to market, loading one bean train in mid-July and another in the first part of August.

Here’s hoping we’ll get some widespread rains soon to help crops catch up and finish strong. We wish you a safe and productive harvest, and please let us know if we can help you market your crop.

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By Lanny Kirsch General Manager • lannyk@watertowncoop.com

Breaking the Green Bridge

By the Agronomy Team

There is one visitor you definitely don’t want in your winter wheat fields—wheat streak mosaic virus. The wheat curl mite, which transmits the virus, makes its home in grassy weeds and volunteer cereal plants, awaiting the opportunity to infect newly emerged winter wheat in the fall. The mites are only able to move short distances and need actively growing grasses to survive and reproduce.

Once the mites transfer the virus through fall feeding, the virus overwinters in the winter wheat, waiting to decimate the crop come spring—and to infect other spring-planted cereal crops. That’s why a burndown application is critically important in “breaking the green bridge” and preventing transmission of the virus that can hit your wheat crop hard.

North Dakota State University specialists who studied a serious outbreak of wheat streak in 2007 reached this conclusion: All fields to be planted to winter wheat should receive a burndown treatment at least two weeks before planting, no matter what the previous crop or the level of volunteer growth present.

Those studying the North Dakota outbreak found that a population of volunteer grain or grassy weeds as low as one plant in 100 square feet was sufficient to support mite populations. The 14-day application interval is important because dying plants can still harbor mites. So don’t take the chance—apply a burndown before planting this fall.

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INSTANT UPDATES

Farmers, if you would like to receive information about special happenings and hours at the Watertown Co-op, please let us know. We need your cell provider and phone number.
Your cattle are moving from one stressful situation to another, with the stress of summer heat almost behind them and the stress of weaning just ahead. We have the products you need to maintain the health and performance of your cattle under these challenging conditions.

How did your cattle handle the summer heat this year? If the answer is, not as well as I had hoped, put our Summer Stress Pack on your must-have list for next summer. The Summer Stress Pack is a popular product for cattle in feedlot and dairy settings that helps them cope with extreme heat.

The Summer Stress Pack helps animals retain water, contains Tasco®, which helps reduce internal body temperature, and features XPC™ yeast to optimize rumen function. It also contains sodium bicarbonate and calcium bicarbonate to stabilize the rumen—very important for cattle in a feedlot setting.

**Brace for weaning**

The ultimate goal in any good weaning program should be getting calves ready for a feedlot setting. Stress Tubs are a great addition to this program. These low-moisture, cooked molasses tubs improve rumen function for more efficient feed utilization. They also provide a complete mineral program to support the calf’s immune system and overall health.

Creep feed is another logical step in preparing calves for weaning and moving them toward the feedlot. It also provides the added benefit of reducing pressure on pastures as grass quality declines. RangeLand® Calf Creep fills in nutritional gaps while its high-fiber composition allows the rumen microbes to stay comfortable digesting forages.

Another addition to your weaning program should be Safe-Guard® dewormer. Reducing the number of parasites in the herd will improve your feed-to-gain ratio—ultimately saving you money. The cost of a deworming program will never exceed the cost of an animal in the dead pile. We carry Safe-Guard in both pellet and block form.

**Feeding and breeding**

As pastures decline, cattle move out onto crop residues, and cows prepare for re-breeding, we have two products that can help your herd. Purina® Breeder Cubes are a convenient and flexible way to improve the body condition score of your cowherd. The cubes can be used where forage quality is low and/or nutritional requirements are not being met, as is the case with crop residues. We carry Breeder Cubes in bag form so you can use them when and where necessary.

Finally, Accuration® Tubs are perfect for cattle on pasture or crop residue. Their Intake Modifying Technology adjusts the consumption of the tubs to the quality of the forage the cattle are consuming, thus filling the nutritional gaps. This is a convenient way to take advantage of cornstalks without slighting your herd’s nutritional needs.

Questions about any of these products and where they fit in your feed program? Talk to us—we’re here to help.

**It’s Answer Plot Time!**

Make plans to attend Watertown Co-op’s customer appreciation event on Sept. 15 located at the WinField Answer Plot® two miles east of Watertown on Highway 212.
Mission Statement: To profitably enhance the success of our patrons.

Henry Expands With an Eye to the Future

By John Guest, Henry Location Manager

Workers are making great progress on our expansion project here in Henry. We’re putting up two 300,000-bushel bins and two 7,000-bushel overhead bins. When the project is completed, we’ll have more than 1 million bushels of capacity at this location.

Dirt work got underway at the beginning of May, the first bin began going up in July, and we’re still on track to complete the work in early to mid-September.

The larger bins will be used primarily for soybeans and corn, but the addition of the overhead bins will give us the option to handle more small grains—spring and winter wheat, oats and rye—in 2017.

We’re making allowances for possible future expansion as we build. As we’re replacing the top conveyor, we’re putting in a wider seven-foot catwalk that will give us the necessary space to accommodate the next phase—which would be another bin and a dryer.

As your yields continue to grow, we’re expanding our ability to handle your harvest. ●