

RiverCountry CO-OP

River Valley News

- **Agri-Tech/Bloomer Grain**
(715) 568-2934
- **Bloomer CENEX**
(715) 568-2343
- **Bloomer CENEX Shop/
Auto Value Parts Store**
(715) 568-2170 | (715) 568-2191
- **Boyd CENEX**
(715) 667-3595
- **Boyd Feed Mill**
(715) 667-3245
(800) 333-7887
- **Cadott Truckstop**
(715) 289-3953
- **Chippewa Falls CENEX**
(715) 723-7005
- **Cornell Country Store**
(715) 239-3173
- **Eau Claire Ferry St. CENEX**
(715) 832-0045
- **Eau Claire Third St. CENEX**
(715) 835-2003
- **Eau Claire Travel Center**
- 29 Pines Restaurant & Sports Lounge
(715) 874-2929
- **CENEX Store**
(715) 874-0290
- **Sleep Inn & Suites Conference Center**
(715) 874-2900
- **Gilman CENEX**
(715) 447-5746
- **Jim Falls CENEX**
(715) 382-4554
- **New Auburn CENEX**
(715) 967-2171
- **Prairie Farm. CENEX**
(715) 455-1490

General Manager's Report



2019 is upon us and as I write this article in mid-January, I am looking at the calendar and thinking, “~90 days and spring agronomy season should be here”. As your co-op manager, I think it’s important to look ahead and prepare for what’s coming up and to also look back a little and see what transpired to get us here today.

Part of the looking back parameter involves your patronage refund checks that will be mailed soon. This is from the business you did with the co-op in our business year 2017/2018 which ended in August of 2018. Your co-op accomplished many things last year and the positive financial results of the fiscal year were one of them as a profit was made to provide a dividend. Here are a couple of financial highlights: Sales \$91.3 million. Net Profit \$1.3 million or 1.5%. Patronage distributed: \$550,000, and \$325,000 returned in cash for stock retirements. Your dividend on a per ton or gallon basis will be similar to last year. In addition, your board has elected to pass on a \$575,000 DPAD tax distribution from the co-op for the customers who sold us grain. “DPAD” stands for “domestic production activities deduction”, an acronym from the IRS for a tax reduction. This DPAD distribution amounts to an average of .17/bushel. Your co-op has solid financial ratios and because of the diversity of its business, continues to weather the economic challenges that lie in front of us.

So in looking ahead, in our agronomy business, we have purchased some new applicator equipment (spreaders/sprayers) in anticipation of a busy agronomy season. Last year we sold a record number of dry tons of fertilizer and preliminary inquiries on agronomy products suggests we will exceed last years business, weather permitting of course. The staff is going through the fleet to make necessary repairs and paint and update older equipment to be ready in spring. In the feed division we have instituted some new marketing programs and this has allowed us to better compete with the new mills opened in our area. We are up on tonnages at this point and are optimistic about the future of feed. While our fixed feed assets are not new, they are updated and efficient as possible. Working with the grain division, the feed division can provide a low cost option on grain and grain derivatives.

In the grain division, last fall we completed the new bin project in Boyd and consequently filled our new bin almost to full capacity. Looking back, the decisions we made to improve the unloading system in Boyd and adding a second unloading system in Bloomer paid off. Our unloading speed is not matched in our market area and we continue to gain business as first time customers continually comment on the unload speed and service. We have seen growth in soybean bushels

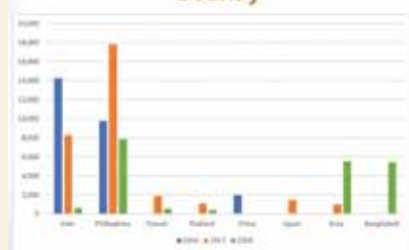
...Continued from page 1

handled due to price economics and our ability to load rail at our intermodal rail yard in Chippewa Falls. **This rail market has an exclusive market that we are part of.** This past winter, we negotiated a transaction to almost double our capacity of containers which is a positive for our soybean customers on storage, contracts and price points. It also allows us to further grow this business and provides an excellent return on investment. Here is a chart of where our soybean market is and another with the population of the world's countries. As you can see, there is a lot of growth potential for our grain products, particularly soybeans. The grain growth has also been beneficial to our trucking division, as it has provided us with better efficiencies and more options.

Population by Country

- 1) China – 1.4 B
- 2) India – 1.35 B
- 3) United States – 326 M
- 4) Indonesia – 266 M
- 5) Brazil – 210 M
- 6) Pakistan – 200 M
- 7) Nigeria – 195 M
- 8) Bangladesh 166 M
- 13) Philippines – 106 M
- 15) Vietnam – 97 M
- 20) Thailand – 70 M

RCC/Scoular DDG Shipments by Country



In the retail segment of the company's business, the convenience stores have seen growth in many areas. We are leveraging our c-store business with the CENEX brand to market our products. The retail business is 40% of our annual revenue and has provided excellent return on investments. It's also an asset that is capitol intensive, requires extensive monitoring and has what we call "hyper competition" from big box retailers. We have updated facilities and monitoring systems that are positioned for future growth and up-to-date on all government/DNR implications.

Our energy business of bulk fuel and propane continues to gain volume. Five million gallons of propane were delivered this past fiscal year with over 200 new propane accounts added. Our bulk fuel growth has been on a slower pace but still strong, showing 15% gains in volume this past year. We have developed programs for prepay and contracting and along with the dividends paid out and the service we provide, our current customers have been our best advertisement.

So, looking ahead, I am making some positive assumptions. There needs to be an uptick in grain and milk prices as our ag business is under tremendous duress. We have strategically positioned assets and newer rolling stock equipment to handle our existing business with room to grow. There are unforeseen challenges that lie ahead and the good news is the co-op has the staff and experience to handle them. Your board and senior management team pro-actively meet to talk about the future and is planning the next steps to ensure the co-op's viability. It is challenging to meet everyone's expectations on profits, dividends, service, price and so forth. But I believe we have a team that can, and will, meet or exceed the norm. Thanks for the business.


Bruce Mlsna | GM/CEO

Greetings from Your CFO



River Country Co-op completed another successful year of operations, for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2018. Patronage checks for the fiscal year will be mailed out in February.

In addition to patronage, another pass through item that producers receive from the co-op is the domestic production activities deductions (DPAD) allocation. The DPAD allocation is the pass through of a tax deduction from the co-op to its producers. Please consult your tax advisor for information on taking the deduction on your tax return. The total amount passed through was \$550,000. This was allocated to producers based on the number of bushels of grain sold to the co-op, and the allocation per bushel was approximately 17 cents. Your grain activity with the co-op can be reviewed online.

To review account information, such as statement detail or grain activity, log onto eAgVantage. The link to eAgVantage can be accessed by clicking on "My Account" in the upper right hand corner of our website, which is www.rivercountrycoop.com. If you are a first time user, click on the "First time sign on" link on the left hand of the eAgVantage screen. From there, you enter your River Country Co-op account number, set up a password, enter the last four numbers of your Federal Tax ID or Social Security number, and enter your e-mail address.

Please call me anytime with questions or concerns. I would be happy to help you get set up on eAgVantage or answer any other questions that you might have.

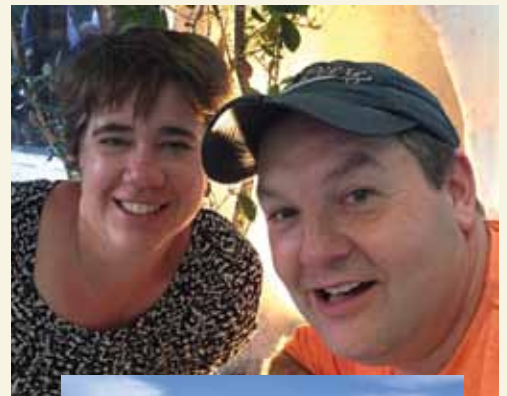



Marty Goss | CFO/CPA | 715-723-2828 x118 | cfo@rivercountrycoop.com

Featured Board Member



Hi my name is Tim Hager, and I am the acting Secretary of the River Country Co-op board. My wife, Becky, and I have been married for 18 years and have three children together; Alex 17, Rachel 15 and Michael 12. On the Southeast end of Chippewa falls, we farm 1,100 acres of cash crop, corn, soybeans and hay and have approximately 100 head of feeder cattle that I finish out. In my free time, I enjoy deer hunting, snowmobiling, traveling and spending time with the family.



I feel that River Country Co-op's diversification is one of our strongest assets. It enables us to weather many economic storms. Being diversified has made it possible to expand our co-op in many ways and still remain profitable. Our grain site in Bloomer, the container loading site in Chippewa Falls and the additional c-stores which we have acquired in the last few years are good examples of our co-op's constant growth and ability to find profitability and service our customers. I also

believe River Country has some of the best management and employees of any co-op around, which is critical in maintaining profitability and service.

As a director on the board of River Country, I believe it's my duty/job to help lead a forward thinking and progressive direction for our co-op while maintaining the interests of our patrons. I believe it is very important to keep an open mind on all matters that are brought forth and to keep a balance between profitability, high quality of service and continue in a positive direction in regards to growth.

I would like to see our co-op continue to grow and maintain profitability. River Country is already a strong cooperative and well-respected business in all the communities we serve. I would hope we can maintain that connection with the community and the farms/farmers we serve. It is hard to envision what the co-op will look like in 10-20 years. Bruce Mlsna, CEO said when he started working for the co-op approximately 20 years ago, there were about 135 cooperatives in Wisconsin and today there are basically 18 remaining. This is mainly due to co-op mergers to become more profitable and efficient. So my expected vision would almost have to contain a possible merger at some point. If a merger were to present itself at some point and was a good fit for our co-op and its patrons, why not?

I'd like to thank all the patrons of River Country Co-op for allowing me to serve on the board for these past years. I am currently on my last term and it has been my utmost pleasure to serve you. It has been such a learning experience and I've made many new friends and acquaintances while serving. It has been an ongoing problem finding people to run for the board, which truly confuses me, because it's a great opportunity to learn about your co-op and its operations. I've always said, if you want something done, or would like to see something changed or fixed, you have to get involved. I would like to encourage everyone who has any interest in being on the board to please run for a position in your district.

Thank you,

Tim Hager
Tim Hager



Credit Department



The days are starting to get longer; it's nice to have the sun staying out past 5 pm. I like the warmer winter, but I keep waiting for the big snow storm to happen. So it's still cold and we'll continue to keep our thermostats cranked up to keep warm. Don't forget to keep an eye on your fuel levels in your tank. I would hate for you to run out and have to pay an out-of-area delivery fee of \$180 and a leak charge of \$95. Ouch, that could hurt the heating budget for sure! Even if you are on scheduled delivery, we ask that you help us out and just keep an eye on your tank. If you get to about 25%, just call us to check to be sure you are on the list for a delivery. When you turn up the heat because it's cold, you will use more L.P. than we have calculated for and you could run out before you are scheduled for a delivery. Also, if you are planning a vacation away from your home, you may want to

be sure you have plenty of heating fuel in your tank before you leave. It would be terrible to come home to a frozen house, trust me it has happened. So add it to your packing list to check your tank.

If you think you may qualify for energy assistance, please give your county office a call. For your convenience, the numbers are listed here: Chippewa 715-726-7840, Dunn 715-232-1116, Eau Claire 715-839-6905, Rusk 715-532-2299, Taylor 715-748-6123.

As you gear up and plan for the upcoming crop season, remember that you can take advantage of financing options. John Deere Financial is a great way to pay and can save you lots of money. To use your John Deere Financial account for agronomy and seed purchases, you need an Agricultural Preferred account with available Special Terms Credit Limit. Another option for you is a financing program through CFA (Cooperative Finance Association, Inc.). The rate is currently only 7.75% (variable) and you can borrow for all your spring input needs. No payment is required until February 15, 2020, but you can make payments on it anytime without prepayment penalties. For more information on what financing options are available, contact your agronomist at Agri-Tech in Bloomer or give me a call.

I would like to help you keep your account current and out of collections. So if your account is going to be late or if an unforeseen circumstance arises and we need to make arrangements, please contact me to discuss the situation. It's always to your advantage to contact River Country prior to you getting a call from our credit department.

Thank you for your continued business and hope you allow us to continue to help keep you warm this heating season.

Brenda Ross
Credit Manager/ Payroll Admin
715-723-2828 x101
brendar@rivercountrycoop.com



JOHN DEERE
FINANCIAL



The Cooperative
Finance Association, Inc.
Financial Services For Successful Agriculture

P. S. Remember to help your fuel driver out by keeping your driveway and walkways clear of snow. If they can't get to your tank, they can't leave you any fuel for heat.

Human Resources/Pricing Coordinator



When people ask me what I do as a pricing coordinator, I find it easiest to explain that it is my responsibility to set and monitor retail prices at our 12 convenience stores. I would like to share what happens behind the scenes as a pricing coordinator. In previous articles, I have explained that, as our suppliers increase their costs, our retails need to reflect that same increase to maintain a healthy margin. This healthy margin generates higher sales numbers in hopes of reaching our yearly sales goals. In this past year, River Country Co-op has taken extra steps to increase these sales numbers. In the previous fiscal year, River Country was enrolled in a scan data program, which allowed us to pass on small discounts to our customers. As for the current fiscal year, River Country enrolled in a scan data program with our loyalty provider Patron Points.

Reporting our scan data through our loyalty provider has allowed us to provide additional discounts to our customers that have a River Country rewards card. This opportunity has allowed the co-op to stay competitive while gaining a better loyalty from our customers. **Being a Rewards member grants you access to our beverage club, gas and diesel discounts, and you can earn 1 point for every dollar spent in the store that can be redeemed at any time because your points never expire.** The best part about the program is that it's free! If you have not signed up yet, I highly recommend you do so by stopping into any of our 12 c-stores and speaking with your cashier. You can start saving as soon as today!

Amber Kastel

Human Resources/Pricing Coordinator | 715-723-2828 x104 | HRPC@rivercountrycoop.com

Energy Sales



Upcoming Fuel Season

As we approach this year's season related to farming, excavating and truck fleets, the topic of conversation often turns to prices of diesel fuel. "When is the best time to lock in my fuel?" Many of our customers often contract their fuel that they will be using for the spring, summer and fall. This could potentially protect them from a spike in prices, therefore reducing the fuel input cost in their business. An excavating company or hauling company could bid projects now, knowing what the fuel price would be in October. A large increase in fuel prices that we have seen in years past would not deplete the project of its profitability.

At River Country Co-op, we contract fuel to end users for the spring, summer and fall periods. These are generally in three month periods. Spring would be March, April and May. Summer is June, July and August and fall is September, October and November. This has worked out very well for the farming customers as well as the excavating and sand mine industries. The Energy department will continuously monitor market trends, news and movements and help customers make decisions on when and how much to contract. In a nutshell, the customer reserves a specific amount of gallons for a specific time period at a specific price.

The last several years the market has been confusing at times and predictable at times. It wasn't too long ago the fundamentals- supply and demand- were the major factors in what way the future price would be. A large supply in the crude oil and heating oil (diesel) segment, coupled with a low demand, would relate to lower prices. In today's world, geopolitical news, terrorism, and other world relationship factors seem to dictate what direction the prices move.

If we take a quick peak at heating oil (diesel fuel), the pricing has seen significant movement over the last 120 days. From the high seen in October to the low seen in January, heating oil has slid over \$0.80 in a matter of 62 days. Since the low, heating oil has seen a rebound, taking back nearly 30-cents in 14 days. Continue to look for news regarding OPEC (supply) and/or China (geopolitical news) to move the markets.

In addition to helping your company prepare for this year's upcoming diesel fuel season, please contact us if you are in need of bulk fuel or bulk oil systems. We have several programs to help you. We can assist in temporary bulk systems, fuel tank trailers and permanent setups.

Feel free to contact us anytime with questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rich Ward".

Rich Ward
Certified Energy Specialist
715-214-3385 (CELL)
rich@rivercountrycoop.com



Energy Department



If you haven't seen this pump label before, you may see it soon, **as E15 (15% ethanol gas)** becomes more available in our area. Instead of the normal 10% ethanol gas (E10) that we are all familiar with, E15 will be another choice at the pumps. This label has been approved by the EPA and states, based on their studies, that it is safe to use in 2001 and newer vehicles and all flex vehicles. On the other hand, the American Petroleum Institute has conducted their own testing,

which shows substantial corrosion related failures of fuel pumps and other equipment in post 2001 vehicles due to the higher alcohol content in E15.

Each is claiming that the others testing is flawed. The auto makers are also concerned about higher alcohol content since their cars were designed to use only E10, unless it is a flex vehicle designed to use up to 85% ethanol-based gasoline. Auto makers have indicated they would like to see more testing. Before you go ahead and decide to fill your car with E15 to save a few cents per gallon, there could be some consequences in doing so. Currently, Ford indicates it is safe for 2013 and newer vehicles, GM is 2012 and newer, and Chrysler is 2016 and newer. For other manufacturers, check with your dealer for the latest information as some manufacturers had initially said it is not safe to use and will void any warranty. Also, the increased ethanol content usually decreases fuel economy and what you save in cost per gallon may be lost in fuel economy, so it is basically a wash. **One thing you definitely do not want to do is use it in small engines and boats as it is unlawful to do so and may cause damage.** Another problem with E15 is the liability issue. Currently, the retailers of E15 may be liable for any damage caused to your vehicle. Unless this changes, many retailers may elect not to handle the product. The reason for E15 is the EPA is looking to boost the amount of biofuels in the system each year through the year 2020. We may see an E20 coming in the future also as a way to help boost the biofuel requirements. This philosophy is like putting the cart before the horse. Many vehicles on the road may not be able to use the higher ethanol blends.

Mike Rinzel

Mike Rinzel
Energy Division Manager
715-723-2828 x107
mrinzel@rivercountrycoop.com



Boyd Feed & Grain



Well another year has passed. Where do they go so fast? One thing about living in Wisconsin, if you don't like it today, tomorrow will be a different day. You can count on that. The fall was different trying to get crops dry. Lots of them went to the dryer. Now it's January, and we are getting rain and ice. No one likes that at all, I hope things get better. Yes, the fall lasted forever it seemed like.

We put up a new bean bin-125 thousand bushels. We filled that one and two other bins with beans. One bin was filled with oats and two others with corn. **All bins got full which is good for us.**

We have feed for almost all your animal needs, large to small. Give us a call and one of our nutritionists will help you with your needs. Help us improve service by calling your order in ahead. Some mixes take more time than others, we want to do a good job for everyone.

I would like to say thanks to all of our customers for doing business with us. Any questions, just give us a call.

Jim Ebert

Jim Ebert
Feed Operations Manager | 715-667-3245 | ebert@rivercountrycoop.com



Grain Department



After a tumultuous market in 2018 with geopolitical disruptions being at the forefront of all of our minds, **what is in store for 2019?** There are many questions that are still out there regarding the status of the trade war between the United States and China. It feels as if we are in a stalemate right now. The good news is that China is buying a few soybeans from the United States, which has helped stabilize the market and push it back up to highs that we have seen since July last year.

Where will we go from here? Well, right now South America is experiencing dryness in Brazil and excessive rain in Argentina. The extended forecast shows more rain will return to Brazil. Overall, production estimates are down a touch which has been supportive. However, with all the excess beans (955 million per last report) we would have to see a large production issue in South America

to change the market much in the United States.

Corn exports are good and production is down from last year. However, we still have plenty of corn sitting around the countryside. Corn prices should be supportive given the reduction in production, but the excessive number of soybeans will keep corn from rallying too much.

At this point, it may feel like we are caught between a rock and a hard place. We just need to formulate a good marketing plan by putting firm offers in place and utilizing other opportunities that could be presented with compass contracts and other alternatives. Give me a call to set up a time to sit down and discuss your strategy.

Paul Kerber

Paul Kerber

VP of Grain | 715-797-8875 (CELL) | paulk@rivercountrycoop.com

**CHECK OUT OUR GRAIN PRICES AT:
DTN.RIVERCOUNTRYCOOP.COM**



Bloomer Grain Plant



Chippewa Falls Intermodal Grain Loading



Boyd Feed and Grain

RiverCountry **AGRONOMY** CO-OP

Benefits of Doing Business:

- 5 Airflow applicators
- GPS Spinner & Sprayer Applicators
- Prepay & save on fertilizer, chemicals & seed
- VRT fertilizer spreading



PLUS
2018 DPAD Tax
Pass Through

Dividend rates: Fertilizer \$4/ton*
Corn 3¢/bushel • Beans 9¢/bushel
Corn 10¢/bushel • Beans 29¢/bushel

**Estimated amount based on historical returns. Checks coming out February 2019.*

Intermodal



Greetings from River Country Co-op Intermodal and Trucking departments. It is easy with the current markets as they are to be discouraged. If you have been involved with agriculture very long, you realize that things will change, and not when you want them to, and usually not when you think they will.

Your cooperative is taking steps to help increase agricultural products exported from our membership farms to ports in Asia. Graphs below show the increased metric tons loaded and shipped out of your Chippewa Falls facility, along with recent increased purchases from other countries beginning to improve their diet. River Country will begin drayage service to ensure that the containers are available to us to fill with agricultural products from membership. We will also

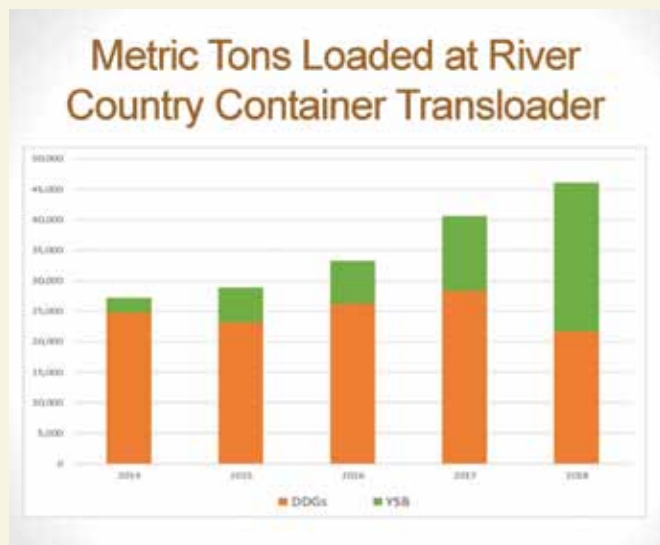
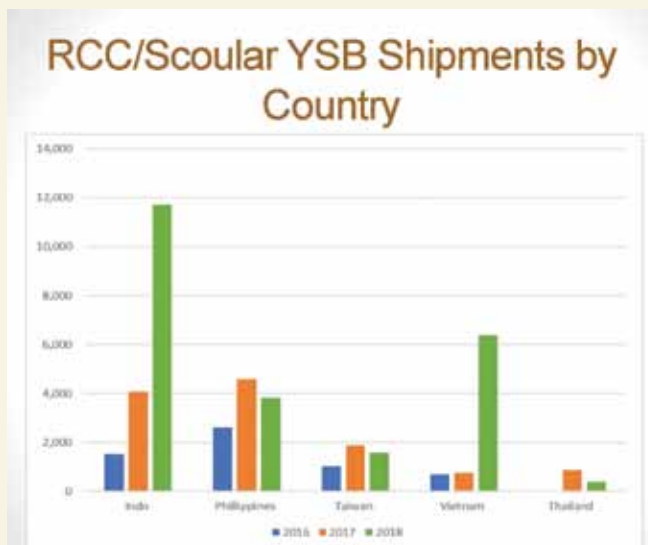
be looking into exporting other products from membership as well.

With the port in Prince Rupert, Canada, expanding again, the agricultural export business looks promising. It is a very exciting time to be connected with River Country Co-op.

Everyone at River country Co-op thanks you for your patronage. Please have a safe and profitable planting season.

Ken Seubert

Ken Seubert
VP Logistics & Intermodal
715-492-1899 (CELL)
kens@rivercountrycoop.com



Ag News



Spring 2019 will soon be here. The current ag economy has made it difficult for our growers to make decisions on crop inputs. Do you plant more corn this year? More soybeans? Corn on corn? Soybeans on soybeans? You need to look at everything you do and decide if there are any changes you

need to make for your farming operation. Cutting costs is the first thing many growers look at but may not be the best option for you, although you need to examine every input cost and decide if it pays for itself. You may even want to consider farming only your more productive land and giving up some of your more marginal land. Whatever decisions you make, what everyone is after, is return on investment (ROI). Nitrogen in corn production can give a huge (ROI) but you need to look at yield potential, soil texture, and organic matter to help identify how much is needed and when to apply it. Potash in soybean production is also very important in improving yields. Weed control is also extremely important in corn and soybean production. Should growers spray once, twice, pre-emerge, or post-emerge? Some things to consider when planning your program.

1-pass pre-emergence programs-Target low risk fields-light weed pressure and no problem weeds like perennials or giant ragweed.

1-pass post-emergence programs-Target low risk fields-light weed pressure but do not over commit acres-early applications are needed to stop early season competition. We have had years when it got really wet in June and was tough to get into fields to spray. Remember if you can plant, we can spray so keep in mind if you have fields that can get wet and stay wet.

2-pass programs-Target high risk fields-moderate or heavy weed pressure or problem weeds like giant ragweed or perennial weeds like Canada Thistle or the weed that has everyone's attention WATERHEMP. This is a good time to discuss your herbicide program and decide what may be a good fit on your farm.

I also want to say we work with several different seed companies and have a lot of different options to offer to our customers. Croplan, Dekalb/Asgrow, NK Brand, Mycogen and Legacy are the seed companies we work with. We also have a seed treater for soybeans. We can inoculate, apply fungicide and/or insecticide in any or all combination on soybean seed. Full treatment is a good idea if planting soybeans on soybeans and many environments with high disease potential. We would be happy to discuss how we could place some of our seed into your farming operation. Thank you for business.

Kevin Giese | Agronomist/CCA | 715-559-1321 (CELL)
Keving.agtech@rivercountrycoop.com



Feed

As the feed needs change on the farm, so do our feed offerings. For example: ground corn mixed with distillers, or ground corn alone. We are able to bring value to the dairy farms with a 400 micron grind that helps with palatability and quality

of feed. We offer top nutrition recommendations with Purina and Form-A-Feed lines for the best production and animal health. Visit with Jim Meyer or Ali Holub and have a feed nutrition checkup. To help deliver a quality product, Jim, Kenny, Gary, Tom and Mike offer their support to make your feed delivery in an accurate and timely manner. We also carry a fairly extensive bag feed line at Chippewa Falls. Jim Anderson is the contact in Chippewa Falls, and Terry or Dave can help you out at our Cornell Country Store.

Agri-Tech

As in feed, needs change for our membership in agronomy. Last spring, tons of fertilizer were at an all-time high. Spraying acres were increased, spreading acres were up and side dress acres were up. **To "handle" these increases and offer timely application, two sprayers and two Rogators will be added to our fleet in 2019.** Boone is working with our staff to make sure we have the correct number of applicators and support people that are capable of an intense spring season. We are in some challenging times in agriculture. It is our goal to add value to our members. It's always a farmer's goal to feed the world and add value even in our challenges. We know these challenges too will pass. Thanks for your business in 2018. We look forward to serving you in 2019.

Cooperatively,

Jeff Polivka | VP Ag Services
715-568-2933
jeffp@rivercountrycoop.com



Ag News (continued...)



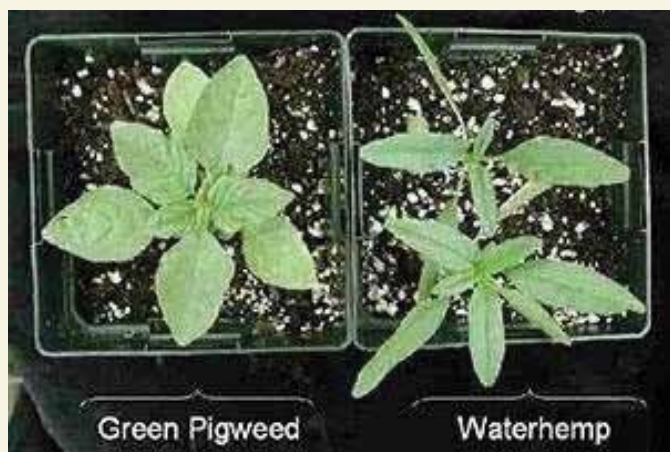
Herbicide Resistant Waterhemp Is Here How Do We Manage It?

Here at River Country, we have identified waterhemp in nearly all areas of our trade territory. This means that if waterhemp is not physically on your farm, it is probably within a few miles away. Why is this important, and what should we do to manage resistant waterhemp? A few facts for you:

1. Waterhemp competes with crop plants through sheer numbers instead of plant size (unlike giant ragweed). Mature waterhemp plants produce a prolific amount of seeds; an average of 250,000-500,000 per plant.
2. Waterhemp outcompetes crops because it grows faster; under good conditions this can be 1 to 1.25 inch per day. Don't count on your crop to canopy and choke it out like other weeds.
3. Waterhemp has a longer germination window than most other annual weeds; a single residual herbicide's application won't last the full season of emergence.
4. Waterhemp has male and female plants, so its genetic diversity changes faster and it more easily develops resistance to herbicides; at this time some waterhemp has tested resistant to six different herbicide groups.
5. Waterhemp is most commonly spread by combines or birds (geese) bringing seed from infested fields and through manure applications containing seed from feed or bedding.

Learn to Identify & Track Waterhemp

It is crucial to identify waterhemp and fields that have waterhemp ASAP to ensure you can plan for the future. **Waterhemp is a member of the pigweed family and can resemble redroot and smooth pigweed or Palmer Amaranth in earlier stages.** At this point, it is the most difficult to identify but in general, waterhemp leaves will be thinner, longer and more oval vs. spade shaped. Later on in the season as it produces seedheads, it may resemble



lambquarters at a distance but a closer look will reveal the same features of the leaves and long, thin and fairly uniform (not bunched up like lambquarters or pigweed) seedheads. A fully mature plant is probably the easiest to identify, so pay close attention during harvest to evaluate your fields. Keep track of fields with waterhemp for next year's herbicide program, and when possible, leave infested fields until the end of harvest so you don't carry the seed directly into the next field. Finally, clean out your combine as best as you can to reduce the seed load for next year.

Plan Your Chemical Program

Effective waterhemp control starts with a pre AND post-emerge chemical program. Trying to control waterhemp after it has emerged and is more than a few inches in height is extremely difficult. The best method of control is a two pass system with a residual on both passes. **The first pass should be pre-emerge residual and a burndown if needed.** The second pass should be a residual with a post-emerge herbicide applied around 30 days later whether you see waterhemp in your fields or not. This is because waterhemp seeds can germinate from early May well into July, after the residual of your first pass has worn off. **The second pass of residual helps hold new seed from germinating until the end of waterhemp germination.** Another piece of effective waterhemp control is pairing your chemical program with herbicide tolerant seed besides RoundUp. An example is using Liberty tolerant beans or corn or the new Xtend (dicamba tolerant) soybeans. Dicamba is a broadleaf herbicide that does a good job controlling waterhemp and it has some residual, unlike Liberty herbicide. Be aware, if dicamba drifts into non-Xtend beans or broadleaf crops, it can cause major damage to the crop. **Don't use dicamba not labeled for Xtend beans.** It is illegal and can cause more drift damage. Also, AMS based adjuvants should not be used with the new dicamba herbicides. Be sure to follow label instructions on buffer zones. Despite these concerns, dicamba is probably still the best option when it comes to controlling waterhemp in your soybean fields.

Evaluate Your Tillage & Cover Crop Methods

With tillage, there is no guarantee that one method will solve a waterhemp problem in your fields. Deep tillage will only work as a short-term solution as it buries the seed out of the germination zone. However, seed viability is increased and repeated deep tillage will work the seed back up.

Vertical tillage works best with a burndown chemical pass before you till. Post tillage burndown slows the uptake of chemical through the already damaged roots, reducing control. Overall, vertical tillage has not really been shown to be a more effective tillage method than no-till on waterhemp.

No-till fields will have more seed in the germination zone of the soil, but with no-till, more seeds tend to be consumed by mice and birds. Also, the seed viability is not as long as in a deep tillage system. If you do a no-till system, you will need an aggressive chemical program to combat the sheer number of seeds that germinate.

The use of cover crops has been shown to help reduce pressure from waterhemp and other weeds. Established

Ag News (continued...)

winter cover crops can help hold back weed emergence early in the spring. Also, often a chemical pass is done to kill off cover crops, which will help control weeds that did emerge. Similarly, hay crops can reduce seedload of waterhemp through repeated cuttings.

Going forward, it is important to realize that the physiological features of this plant probably make it unrealistic to get 100% control. But, using appropriate tools and stacking modes of action will prevent more resistance in the future and make it possible to get good control and preserve crop yields in the long term. Make sure to create a plan with your agronomist for controlling this destructive weed.

Josh Frederickson

Josh Frederickson | Agronomist/CCA
715-933-0255 (CELL) | joshf@rivercountrycoop.com

Dakota James

Dakota James | Agronomy Sales
715-559-1222 (CELL) | dakotaj@rivercountrycoop.com



Agriculture continues to be a tough industry to be involved in. Commodity prices are consistently poor, farmers are struggling with the ability to repay existing financing, much less getting money for the next year, and our political presence throughout the world is causing some tariff issues.

As we head into this upcoming growing season, we as a co-op, want to maintain and grow our customer base. **We also try to keep our prices competitive, so our customers keep coming back each year and don't price shop elsewhere.** As an agronomist, I want to be your trusted source of information when it comes to crop production on your operation. I feel if I added value to your operation, that I have done my job well. As a farmer, if someone could add value to my farming operation, I would definitely want them to be part of my overall team. As other farmers in the area learn of this added value, I hope they would be curious to know if I could also add the same value to their operations.

So to our existing customers, let others know about the good job that we do here at the co-op. To our future customers, don't be afraid to look in a new direction to seek some different and possibly value-added information.

Thank you for your continued support of your co-op!

Bill Buescher

Bill Buescher | Agronomy Sales
715-933-0256 (CELL) | billb@rivercountrycoop.com



Well here we go again, another odd winter thus far in Wisconsin. At the time I'm writing this, we currently have just a dusting of snow left, if any, due to the rain we have gotten that we could have used last summer. Hopefully all of the legume crops survive this winter healthy and bountiful so everyone can get there

hay supplies built back up.

We are currently running Purina Inoculant early booking promotions until the end of February. This is a unique program because you do not have to take receipt of your haylage inoculant until April and your corn inoculants until August. I have seen numerous above normal yeast counts and some mold in corn that was harvested last year for silage or snaplage, so this is a management tool you may wish to consider if you haven't used in the past. **We also will be offering beef mineral spring booking discounts from the Purina Wind & Rain and also Rangeland lineup in 50 pound bagged form and tubs.** Please contact me or the feed mill in Boyd if this is something you are interested in for pricing. Just for easy figuring, the average beef cow will consume one 50 pound bag of mineral every 6 months.

QLF is another product that we carry at the feed mill in bulk in Super Bov 24 and Select 40. We have the equipment to set you up and can deliver those products to you to put in a lick tank. We also have the ability to custom order QLF products in 6 ton lots and deliver directly to you and put in a tank on farm set up by us or QLF. We supply the equipment as long as you purchase the product from the co-op and agree to a usage commitment.

We also carry Land-O-Lakes milk replacer, Ampli Calf starter feeds and Purina Heifersmart mineral. We can custom mix for you at the feed mill for all sizes and types of livestock.

I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2019!

Jim Meyer

Jim Meyer
Purina Nutritionist
715-314-0396 (CELL)
jwmeyer@landolakes.com



Convenience Stores



From fuel to snacks and everything in-between, we have you covered. Our 12 Cenex locations provide our customers with a variety of products and services. Sign up at any of our River Country locations for our Rewards card and start earning points with every purchase. Stop into our stations in Chippewa, Cadott, Eau Claire Travel Center, or Bloomer Shop to fill your propane tanks to keep those ice shacks warm this winter.



Ten out of our twelve Cenex locations offer a Hot Stuff deli. The Hot Stuff food program offers a variety of breakfast items, sandwiches, pizzas, breadsticks, and cookies to satisfy your taste buds. For the nights where supper is an inconvenience, grab one of our Hot Stuff take n' bake pizzas.

Our Bloomer Shop location provides our customers with a trustworthy place to bring their cars to be serviced. All the auto parts come from our very own Auto Value Parts Store where we offer our patrons 10% off all auto parts. Our new Parts Technician, Mark, and his 20 years of auto parts experience can answer any of your auto parts needs. While you wait for your automobile, let Seth help you purchase a gun!

Our stores offer an assortment of local products. Yellowstone Cheese out of Cadott delivers fresh squeaky cheese curds every Wednesday and Saturday. Our customers can also pick up specialty meats from Crescent Meats out of Cadott. The Eau Claire Travel Center features many local wines, beer, and liquors from River Bend, Autumn Harvest, and the Chippewa River Distillery, all out of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.

Thanks for your business, and we look forward to serving you again soon!

Heather Barrows

Heather Barrows
VP of Convenience Stores
715-723-2828 x100
heatherb@rivercountrycoop.com



Jim Falls Cenex



Cadott Truckstop



Cadott Scale



Prairie Farm 

Our Prairie Farm location sold 2,362 packages of Bakers Dozen cookies

= 30,706 COOKIES TOTAL!



Bloomer Shop



Hello from the Bloomer Shop and Auto Value Parts Store. Looking back on this past year, there have been a lot of changes. Last February we started a new chapter adding an Auto Value Parts Store to the new Bloomer shop location. It has been quite a process bringing in **2 ½ semi loads of inventory**, learning a new computer system and how the parts store works. Business has been steadily increasing, and having the parts for the shop has helped us be more competitive. It is convenient and more efficient to get the parts off the shelf and go to the shop with them without having to wait for delivery.

Please welcome our new auto parts specialist; Mark. He is fitting in nicely and his many years of experience in the automotive industry have been a big help to us.



We are still doing full service on Wednesday and Saturday. They are generally our busiest days of the week. So if you need auto parts, gas, guns, beer, car maintenance, tires, or a number of other things, stop and see us. We look forward to serving you in the New Year.

Seth Welle

Seth Welle | Manager – Bloomer Shop | 715-568-2170 | bloomershop@rivercountrycoop.com

Eau Claire 3rd Street



Our Eau Claire 3rd Street location had a face-lift with wood siding put up inside. Customers like the new country look, it seems to have brightened up the store. It won't be long before we can open up the car wash and get all the winter grime off the vehicles. Reward customers continue to grow, especially with the added \$1 off 2-pks of Marlboros!



Pam Weichert

Pam Weichert

Manager – Third Street C-Store | 715-835-2003 | thirdstcstore@rivercountrycoop.com

Cornell Country Store



Hello from the River Country Cornell Store. Welcome 2019 and Happy New Year!

We have your spring needs for your lawn and summer food plots. We still have a supply of mulches, soils, fertilizers and lawn lime to keep everything looking great. We carry gardening supplies, including gloves, hand shovels and garden hoses to get ready for food plots and gardens.

We also have a wide variety of pesticides to help with Asian beetles, flies, spiders and ants, including Thermacell (with refills) to manage those pesky mosquitoes, and tick spray. We are carrying a nice selection of quality bird seed and bird houses, Hummingbird and Oriole feeders and food. Always an exciting sign of spring.

Summer Animal Health

We carry all your pet and livestock feeding supplies, including Purina products.

We have a large quantity of barbless wire at a super price. Give me a call or stop in. We have water tanks and floats, fly spray and a variety of controllers for your livestock, horses and cattle.

Guns and Bows

We continue to have a large inventory of guns, crossbows and ammo to meet all your hunting needs and target practice. If I don't have what you're looking for on hand, I will order and have it in a few days.

Don't forget we fill any size portable propane tanks for those summer and hunting cabins, campers and grills right here on site.

Continue to enjoy the winter we have left and get ready for a new exciting spring!

Terry Scheidler

Terry Scheidler | Manager – Cornell Country Store | 715-239-3173 | terrys@rivercountrycoop.com

Hospitality



New Year brings freshness to the hospitality division within the Eau Claire Travel Center!

Wisconsin-centric. At 29 Pines, our chef has a passion for the Midwest and the foods unique to this region. Our dishes are uniquely Wisconsin-centric with

locally sourced products. We want you to find comfort here at 29 Pines. Early 2019, we will be releasing our new dining room menu, including all your Midwest favorite dishes, served better than ever! Our menu has it all, from Ellsworth Cheese Curds, our famous entrée, pan fried walleye, to our fresh Angus beef ½ pound patty burgers and delicious parmgarlic fries. You'll want to save room for the dessert. Be sure to try our fresh homemade pies!

Full Service. Sleep Inn & Suites Conference Center is the true original full service wedding banquet facility in the Chippewa Valley. Choose from one of our three packages that include everything you'll need to create your perfect wedding day! No additional cost for linen, plates, silverware or napkins. One price, one stop! We do it all: decorating, tear down, cake serving, table clothes, napkins, center pieces, elegant chandeliers, ceiling draping, hotel discount room blocks and more! We have an on-site banquet chef catering from our one and only 29 Pines. He offers many combinations of entrées and dessert options, to meet every taste bud. We're here to make your day just as you imagined!

Sleep Better. With our newly refreshed hotel rooms, sleeping in at the Sleep Inn has never been easier! Every inch of our guest rooms has been renovated. You'll enjoy our plush pillow top mattresses, calming color pallet and modern touches. Start each day with our full complimentary breakfast. Enjoy daily rotation of our hot menu of sausage, bacon, ham and eggs. New in 2019, we are offering our guests the best fiber-optic internet speed available!

We invite you to come see the new freshness in hospitality at the Eau Claire Travel Center, see you soon!

Stacey Bunkelman

Stacey Bunkelman

VP Hospitality

715-874-2900 x107

sleepinn@rivercountrycoop.com



Happy 2019! Since writing my last newsletter article, a lot has happened for me. I'll start on the personal side. In September, my husband and I finally tied the knot. It was a wonderful and special day surrounded by friends and family. There is a lot of pressure when banking on an outdoor wedding

ceremony, but it turned out to be an absolutely beautiful day.

As we are both now settled in our careers, the fun of house buying will begin!

On the professional side, it's hard to believe that I have only been in my role since May. Since joining the team, one of my first priorities was becoming as submerged into the Chippewa community as possible. In my role, I quickly found that people like to do business with someone they know and trust. In order to build relationships and in turn, increase sales, I set a goal for myself to diversify my network and become as involved in the community as a work week would allow for.

Currently, I serve as an Ambassador for the Eau Claire and Chippewa Chambers and I am a member of the BNI (Business Network International) group in the Chippewa Valley. I'm a Young Professionals Member, and a Junior Achievement adult classroom volunteer.

In my last article, I touched on a goal of increasing our off-site catering business. One way we tackled this goal as a team was being selected as the catering sponsor for the Eau Claire Chamber-Job and Business Expo. Our happy hour selection was enjoyed by hundreds of professionals who attended the event. The feedback we received was phenomenal, and we booked future catering gigs just from this one event.

As we head into the new year, I would encourage you to visit our facility and see all that we have going on! Monday's we now offer trivia, the 1st Tuesday of every month is Family Night and Thursday's is DJing/Karaoke.

I hope your 2019 is your best year yet!

Brooke Petska

Brooke Petska

Community Relations & Marketing Coordinator

715-874-2900 x141

sleepinnsales2@rivercountrycoop.com



CONTACT ME TO BOOK YOUR WEDDING OR NEXT EVENT!

Lilly Daemu

Event Coordinator

715-874-2900 x102

sleepinnsales@rivercountrycoop.com

Graphics & Marketing



If you're thinking that I look familiar, you may have seen me on TV during the morning news! We currently have a commercial running on WQOW 18 and also in the previews before your movie at a few of the Micon movie theater locations. The goal of our commercial is to highlight each of our divisions and educate the general public about all the different divisions our co-op is made up of. I think it's great that River Country Co-op is so diversified, not only because of the impact that we have on various communities and individuals, but also to be unique from many other co-ops. It's important that our presence in these smaller communities continue to be positive through various c-store remodels, scholarships, donations, fair booths, local events, music festivals, equipment and facility upgrades, parades, etc. Part of my job is to inform the local communities of the exciting changes and events in their areas so that everyone can feel involved and know what their co-op is doing for them.

A few of the most recent updates we've had include the additional grain bin at the Boyd feed mill, new carpet and flooring throughout the banquet space, restaurant and hotel at our Eau Claire Travel Center, and the purchase of a new boom truck to help with our propane tank delivery and pickup service.

In early December, we held another food drive at all of our c-store locations encouraging both employees and customers to participate in donating to the Feed My People Food Bank. This year we were able to donate 282 pounds of food and supplies, which exceeds our last years donation by 60 pounds!

Due to our wide range of services that we offer and our vast customer base, I have been attending Eau Claire and Chippewa Chamber events, along with Young Professionals meetings to stay up to date on all the happenings in the area. It's important to be well-informed of the current trends and needs to better serve our customers.

Hope you're having a wonderful new year, and looking forward to spring!

Lisa Hardy

Lisa Hardy

Graphics & Marketing Specialist | 715-723-2828 x105 | graphics@rivercountrycoop.com



STAY INFORMED WITH UPDATES & SPECIALS!

1. TEXT MESSAGING

2. FACEBOOK



- RIVER COUNTRY CO-OP
- SLEEP INN & SUITES
CONFERENCE CENTER
(EAU CLAIRE, WI)
- 29 PINES RESTAURANT AND
THE LODGE

3. WEBSITE

WWW.RIVERCOUNTRYCOOP.COM

Bloomer	=	RCCBLM1
Boyd	=	RCCBOYD
Cadott	=	RCCADOTT
Chippewa Falls	=	RCCCF
Eau Claire	=	RCCEC
Gilman	=	RCCGIL
Jim Falls	=	RCCJF
New Auburn	=	RCCNA
Prairie Farm	=	RCCPF

Choose your favorite
C-store location from the
list and text the appropriate
corresponding code to the
number 51660.

Call me with questions!





1080 West River Street
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729



like us.



River Country Co-op



Sleep Inn & Suites



29 Pines

Earn rewards on every purchase you make. Sign up today at these **CENEX** locations:

Chippewa Falls, Cadott, Bloomer, Boyd, Eau Claire, Gilman, Jim Falls, New Auburn & Prairie Farm



As a member enjoy on-going club specials, monthly specials and when you use your card receive a

3¢ Discount Per Gallon on Gas & Diesel

PIZZA CLUB

Buy 5 personal pan pizzas
and get 1 FREE



MILK CLUB

Buy 9 gallons and get 1 FREE



BEVERAGE CLUB

Buy 9 coffee, cappuccino or any
fountain drink and get 1 FREE



BREAKFAST CLUB

Buy 6 Hot Stuff breakfast
sandwiches and get 1 FREE

