

AUGUST
2021

RiverCountry CO-OP



IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 REPORT FROM BRUCE MLSNA, CEO
- 4 BOARD OF DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT
- 5 AGRONOMY UPDATE
- 8 FEED UPDATE
- 12 GRAIN UPDATE
- 13 RETAIL UPDATE
- 15 ENERGY UPDATE
- 17 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS
- 19 MEET THE INTERNS

YOUR GUIDE TO LOCAL FARMING NEWS & MORE

Getting through a tough

The smell of Fall is in the air.... The days are shorter, corn is tasseled and football games are on the horizon. For your Cooperative, August is the last month of the fiscal business year. So with that in mind, I will give you some updates on your Co-op as we finish out one fiscal year with an eye on next year.

Business-wise, sales or gross revenue for the co-op this year are up quite substantially. Some of the increase in revenue dollars is inflation with the higher commodity prices of fuel, grain and fertilizer, but most of the increase comes from new business in several areas. Total company, we are expecting sales revenue this year to end at record levels, around the \$250 million dollar range. While growth is important as we try to keep up with rising operating costs to have a net profit to pay "the bills", retire stock and improve operations, I am often asked this time of year how we are going to "end up"? Our preliminary indications at about ten months of operations are "projecting" a two to three percent bottom line net savings. This is similar percentage wise to last year but dollar increases due to higher sales volume. That being said, everything is **preliminary** as we finish out the business year in August. **Here is an update by division.**

This past spring, your agronomy division achieved growth in all areas but specifically in dry fertilizer tonnages. **The higher grain commodity prices, combined with favorable weather conditions across**

the trade area and some new business growth, has our volume up around 15% compared to 2020. The addition of some new application equipment and new people talent were timely and have received positive reviews. We had challenges in logistics and supply but the agronomy staff managed their way through these issues. Looking ahead, we have made some investments in equipment and facilities planning ahead for the 2022 spring season. We have some plot days on the calendar coming up and the agronomy staff will be looking for data on last year's crops to see what improvements we can make.

Our retail or consumer business in all areas has been strong as the sales rebound from the 2020 COVID era. Gross revenue has increased in c-stores, hospitality, auto parts and in the energy division, which is the bulk propane and fuels area. **Volume metrics show increases in foot traffic in stores resulting in higher unit sales of inside groceries, increases in units sold of auto parts, and gallons in terms of energy products such as gas, diesel and propane.** Events such as the music fests, fairs and sporting events has traffic moving on highways and streets comparable to past years of pre-COVID. Your retail convenience store division consisting of 21 stores has a captive audience with cumulative customer counts of approximately 14,000+ per day looking to buy Ag products among the items we sell. The

return on investment in this division has been strong as we close out on the fiscal year in August.

Good weather and volumes from the 2020 growing season have had positive impacts on the grain division as volumes are up 40% over the previous year. Market prices are up substantially since fall, increasing the optimism of grain producers as we near the end the 2021 growing season. Crop conditions across the trade area vary, but for the most part look average to excellent. We have made some investments in grain to improve speed, grain handling condition and logistics. Our intermodal soybean exporting business is up and we have developed strong relationships for a positive future business model in this area. We have some new staff at different locations and as we enter our harvest season, our goals are quite simple. "Get our grain customers in and out as fast as we can!"

Our feed volume has significant increases in tonnage as some of our new people talent acquisitions have shown positive returns. The feed production business has been challenging at times as we are still working to better ourselves in performance, quality and service out of our new feed complex in Owen. The acquisition of some new feed delivery units was one of our updates we prioritized, and we are adding a couple more units in the next 12 months. This saves your co-op

year in stride

by Bruce Mlsna, CEO



repair expense and allows for better service as breakdowns cut down. The volatile price of milk and uncertain future commodity prices make it challenging for our dairy farmers, but our focus as a feed division is to provide experienced nutrition talent with marketing options to give our feed customers options in their feed purchase inputs. We understand we have to improve in specific areas and we are addressing some of these weaknesses and making adjustments to be a premier feed company in our trade area.

A ballot was sent out in July for updating the Bylaws of the

...making adjustments to be a premier feed company in our trade area.

Co-op. As agriculture in general has changed and we have grown through mergers, survived some challenges such as COVID-19, we addressed some changes in the Bylaws we felt were needed to maintain successful continuity in your co-op. Your co-op operates complex businesses and has a track record of being successful financially and the premise on everything was to ensure this keeps happening. The board of your co-op and myself spent a lot of time evaluating our current Bylaws to make sure we offer equal representation to all customers in all geographies with an opportunity to vote and partake in the annual meeting. **This year's annual meeting will be held in Curtiss in December.** We are expecting an in-person meeting this year with no restrictions. We encourage your participation and feedback as we hold the first in-person annual meeting of the merger era.

Fall is a busy time of year for everyone. **We are about**

We encourage your participation and feedback as we hold the first in-person annual meeting of the merger era.

to open the new Merrill convenience store which will be a great asset to the co-op and for those patrons in the Merrill area. This will be a significant upgrade over the former site. The store sits in a strategic location and we are confident on its return on investment. We are also in the planning stages of some upgrades in other Ag business units/locations. As we finalize some of these, we will communicate these announcements.

Thanks for the business, I hope your Fall goes well. ■



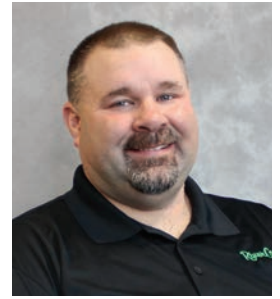
The Board of Directors on a company tour at our Marathon City location.

Senior Management Staff



Marty Goss, Paul Kerber, Heather Barrows, Steve Hanvold, David Hartley, Brian Streveler, Brad Podevels & Todd Heise

Board Member Spotlight: Terry Gumz



Terry farms on his 2nd generation farm in Dorchester, Wisconsin, alongside his parents. He has around 2,000 acres of crops consisting of corn, soybeans, wheat and this last year he added malting barley. Along with crops, he also has 100 head of Holstein/Angus cross steers and does custom combining for other farmers in the area.

Terry had served on the former Heartland Cooperative Services board for many years and is currently serving out a two year commitment on the new River Country Co-op board. Terry's board seat will be eliminated as the board will reduce size from 10 to 8 at the annual meeting.

"It's good to invest in something you're good at and to make it better."

"I was in favor of the merger of the two former co-ops and the ideas and philosophies we talked about when we put these two companies together are now showing results.

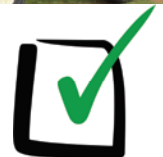


We have made a lot of improvements and I think this merger shows what can be done when you merge resources and strengths of both organizations." He always likes to look forward to the future and do things right the first time. He said that it's very important to use common sense. Terry's vision for the future of River Country Co-op is to consistently improve on what we're doing and to keep an eye out for new opportunities on the horizon.

During the off-season, Terry enjoys camping, snowmobiling, UTVing and also taking vacations and traveling. ■



Amendment Vote Passed



Wednesday, August 11th, the votes were counted for the passage of three amendments to the Bylaws. Ballot clerks were farmers Lee Jensen from Elk Mound, and Dennis Hawkins from Chippewa Falls along with board members, Randy Mahr, Brad Juedes and Eric Vogel. Ballots were mailed to all farm stockholders with a simple majority needed for passage. **The vote passed at a 88.2% approval.** These amendments become effective immediately and will be used in the upcoming director elections. This year, two board members, Tim Hager from Chippewa Falls, and Terry Gumz from Dorchester, will step down from the board to reduce the total board to eight per the merger agreement. Current directors Les Danielson and Jeremy Goessl of Owen will be up for election at this year's annual meeting. If you have interest in running for the board against one of these two directors, please contact Randy Mahr as he will be part of the nominating committee that will be formed in August. Mail ballots will be sent out prior to the annual meeting, which is scheduled for **12:30 pm on December 15th in Curtiss, WI.** ■



Dennis Hawkins and Lee Jensen



Fall 2021 & Beyond

by Steve Hanvold, VP of Agronomy
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As we head into the fall of 2021 and reflect on the growing season that was,

there's a lot of interesting developments. As the government gets more and more involved in the business, there's more swings in pricing. In the fall of 2020 and throughout 2021 there was the countervailing lawsuit affecting phosphates. This caused all kinds of havoc in the phosphate market. It caused higher pricing and limited supply. There were many long hauls from distant terminals and spot outages involved in keeping our plants supplied with products. It appears as though something similar is on the horizon for some of the nitrogen products going into 2022.

COVID in 2021 was still showing its damages too.

Limited consumer usage of some products was to blame for lack of production of some fertilizer products, as some products are derived from waste of other production. So, some products that we couldn't have imagined to have shortages of, had severe shortages; therefore, spot outages and higher pricing. **Fertilizer in general**

saw unprecedented run ups in pricing.

This was caused by many different things. But the net effect was hard to stay current on. Many times, distribution pricing would change multiple times per day.

However, the ability to stay supplied in product and move it at an extraordinary pace, resulted in increases in sales. **Sales are up across the board.** Applications in dry fertilizer are up substantially.

Our growing season, for the most part, was pretty good. **As of the time of writing this newsletter, our growing degree days are up almost 10% from last year.** This is still, surprisingly, a bit short of the 30-year average. Although there were some moisture shortfalls in our area, they were nothing like other parts of the nation. International demand and domestic droughts have caused commodity prices to move to great selling areas as well.

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Allen Abegglen with our new JD fertilizer spreader



Airflow unit acres were up over 10,000 from 2020

As we move into 2022, we'll continue to do what we've been doing as River Country Co-op. **We'll continue to upgrade equipment and facilities and make things better for our ability to distribute product to meet our member's demands.**

With that, I wish to thank everyone for their patience and patronage and look forward to a mutually prosperous 2021. Happy harvest season! ■



Introducing Jeremy

by Jeremy Drewitz, Precision Agronomy Specialist
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Hi, my name is Jeremy Drewitz, and **I am River Country Co-op's new Precision Agronomy Specialist.** I started with River Country in January 2021 and I cover our entire agronomy territory from Bloomer to Marathon City. My wife, Jessica, and I have been married for 7 years. She accepted a teaching position for the Abbotsford school district this year.

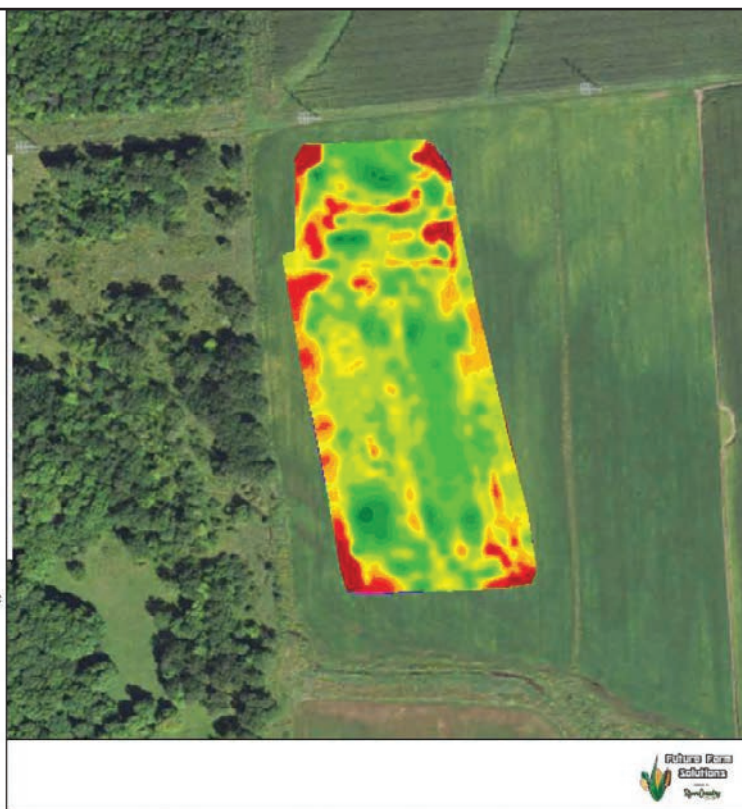
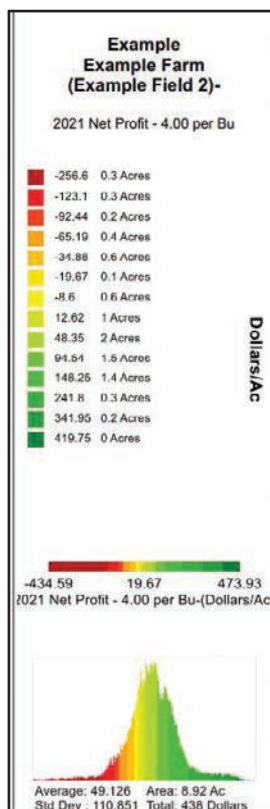
As a Precision Agronomist, I specialize in:

- setting up grid and zone soil sampling
- data management
- processing imagery, soil data, yield data, and other forms of field specific data into usable and understandable formats
- creating variable rate recommendations including phosphorus, potassium, nitrogen top dressing in season, lime, and planting maps
- helping farmers and applicators with their equipment monitors
- building new programs to help our patrons to be more profitable and efficient

One new program is our Net Profit Program.

With this program, using a farmers yield data, I can show each acre of their field, where they are making a profit, how much that profit is, where the field is struggling, and where we can help better manage that acre. This helps with making more informed decisions on that field in the coming years.

I am looking forward to working with our patrons and helping them to become more profitable and efficient through precision technology and services. If you have any questions on how precision ag can help with your operation, give me a call. ■



Example of a map that gets processed out of the net profit program, where the farmers profit data from their yield gets compared to their expenses data to show acre by acre where they are making profit in a field and where the field is struggling



Booth space at 2021 Farm Technology Days





Mapping Fields

by Butch Schreiner, Athens Agronomy/Feed Manager
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After each growing season, we like to evaluate areas we can improve upon as we continue to grow and evolve as a company. There are changes we are implementing to make things easier and more accurate for ourselves and our customers. **One of these changes includes getting growers' fields digitally mapped so we can minimize errors when spraying, spreading, soil sampling, and scouting.**

In the past, locating fields generally required the customer to be around or to provide a map of some sort to the applicator. We maintained some growers' maps over the years on paper, but many have become outdated and inaccurate. We have also been lucky enough to have employees who have worked here for many years and just know customers' fields. Sometimes the method of finding a field included: "It's the field with the rock pile in it, down the lane, next to the woods owned by so 'n' so". Our employees know the fields and customers so well, that maps weren't always needed. **Times are changing with employees and technology which means we need to evolve as well.**

The past few years we have been utilizing digital maps more and more as technology has advanced with smart phones and tablets. We have some new employees who don't know the lay of the land like the older generations do. Land seems to change hands more frequently these days, with more acres being rented out than in the past. The grower who had the land last year, may not be who has it the following year.

Mapping fields is a change for the better. It takes the guess work out of it for our applicators. Customers do not need to be around and take the time to show us fields if we have accurate maps. They can call in with a field name and accurate acres, so there isn't any guessing. It can also help you keep records of which fields got what hybrid, chemical, or fertilizer. It can help you track if a field has specific weed or disease issues, as well as maintain soil sample data on each field to determine which fertilizers are needed. These are key aspects of a nutrient management plan, which is a very valuable tool to keep your ROI where you want it. As agronomists, having your maps at our fingertips when scouting can help us pinpoint areas of interest in your fields.

Times are changing with employees and technology which means we need to evolve as well... Mapping fields is a change for the better.



We are always here to help you reach your goals for your fields. **As planning for next spring begins, please keep us in mind for your agronomy needs and stop in to discuss getting your fields mapped.** Also, consider prepaying for your fertilizers, seed, and chemicals to get in on the early order deals. Prepaying for fertilizer this past fall really paid off for a lot of growers. Commodity prices have been looking good and hopefully will stay strong as the season progresses. Crops are looking great out there so far and if all continues to go well, we will have some excellent yields. **From all of us here at Athens Agronomy, thank you for your business.** We hope you all have a great rest of the summer and look forward to a safe and successful fall harvest! ■

Starting in Fall of 2021, we will have an "airflow" dry fertilizer unit in Athens. Stop in to take a look as we have it available now to use. Call us about the benefits of using an airflow.





Looking Forward to Fall

by Brian Streveler, VP of Feed

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As the summer ends and fall begins, we will soon be watching football games, schools will be starting up again and the leaves will be changing. **Most years, fall is also the best time to look at locking in your feed needs for the upcoming year.** After last year's run up in the market, many people are asking when it will be time this year to lock in feed prices for the upcoming year. Thankfully protein markets have come off their highs from last year. **Soybean meal is currently \$100 lower than it was this past January.** I think we will see the market soften more as we get into the end of August and early September. Please contact me at the Owen office, or your sales person for updated prices. **We can contract most of your needs.** We specialize in fixed price contracts and price cap contracts.

We specialize in fixed price contracts and price cap contracts.

We continue to look at opportunities to utilize our rail system that comes into the mill in Owen. We are currently pulling product out of Canada and as far away as Wyoming in the US. Having access to rail allows us to save on freight cost and allows River Country Co-op to buy ingredients from more locations. That helps us find the best value for our customers.



Rail unloading facility at Owen

We continue to work on being more efficient. Thank you to everyone that calls in orders early. This helps us group loads together to keep our trucks full and running efficiently.

We invested in new bulk feed semi-trucks, that haul more feed and therefore are more efficient. Please let us know if a semi will work in your yard for delivering your bulk feed. With bag feed we would like to have a 2-day notice. This helps us make quality feed. When this happens we are able to make all our calf feed for the day, then switch to protein mixes, then mineral mixes and so on. Making similar feeds at the same time helps reduce the chances of getting cross contamination through the bagging system. We have a large warehouse with our mill at Owen. We would rather have extra finished feed in the warehouse for a few days, then have to rush a mix through our system and not make the best possible product.

We have a lot of experienced nutritionists on staff. Give us a call and we will stop out for an evaluation and quote if you'd like.

Thank you for your business! ■



New bulk feed truck



Clark County Fair shown by the Goessl's from Owen



Feeding Strategies

by Randy Krause, Nutritionist
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I started dairy nutrition in 1997 after attaining an Animal Science degree from UW-River Falls. In the last 24 years, I have also been an Agricultural Loan Officer for 5 years. This year has gone fairly well on the cropping side with good yields and quality from the crops. **The milk revenue side has been turbulent with surprising PPD's and varying base milk prices.**

Is there one feeding strategy that is best for all dairies to produce the best profit? Unfortunately, the answer is **no**. The **fresh cows are the best place to produce the most profitable milk** as their peaks will determine how much milk they will likely produce in that lactation. How the cow attains this peak is the most important. It all starts with the dry cow program, and how well she calves and transitions into the milking line. If all is going well, then keep doing it. However, if there are issues, a qualified nutritionist like those at River Country Co-op, are there to help correct the problems.

Some key areas to monitor are peak milks for cows and heifers, MUN levels, consistency of manure, and feed intakes on these fresh cows. The **biggest challenge** I see is fresh cows in tie-stall barns standing with little or no TMR in front of them for too long of a time. These cows

become thinner, have lower peaks, and don't breed back as well.

An easy number to calculate is **cost/day** on the milking herd. This feeding strategy can use total cost/day from the home-grown forages, purchased feeds, minerals, or just purchased costs. Being able to pay the bills is necessary to stay in production when the revenues are not great enough to cover the expenses. **The nutritionist can help make these tough, hopefully short-term decisions if cuts need to be made.** The goal is to save more money than is possibly lost by reducing costs. The most common changes are in amino acid feeding, fat feeding, and using less expensive proteins.

I would challenge dairy producers to look closely at other areas first, besides cost/day. One area is the heifer feeding program costs in older heifers. This can be a significant expense, so count the number of heifers and look at the cost/day. Reducing costs here from \$.03 to \$.10/day can make a big difference. Another area is grouping strategies of mature cows, 1st lactation cows, and/or stages of lactation. Cutting



Alfalfa and corn in the Owen area



costs in these areas can be done easier with a lower impact on production.

All of these strategies need to come from a well-planned cropping system. Each producer needs to maximize yield and quality to fit their feeding goals. Use your River Country Co-op nutritionist to get the best feeding strategy for your farm. Our staff has seen the ups and downs before, and will have many good ideas to share with producers. ■





Marathon Feed & Grain

by Todd Heise, GM of Marathon Feed & Grain
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Our spring and summer season has been busy and productive. **We have been very fortunate, the rain came when we needed it, and the crops are looking good.**

Some summer changes completed, our office addition and our staff has moved into their new space. The meeting room/breakroom has hosted a few meetings and luncheons. We have graded the driveway throughout the property, for a smooth transition between buildings. The additional scale is complete just south of our new office. The truck route will travel west of the building and circle back to keep the truck traffic flowing. The grain software and grain probe are installed. The scale will add efficiency and speed to our operation and we look forward to grain season!

Our sales have been strong and look to have a record year, as we near the end of our fiscal year, August 31st, 2021. Sales revenue look to be around 20+ million for our company this year. We are up on

volumes and application acres from 2020. Favorable weather condition and higher commodity prices have helped. **We added some new application equipment along with the additional facility upgrades.** We have seen significant improvements in time and less breakdowns. Our grain business is up and with the volumes of River Country, we are able to offer better basis numbers. Give me a call, we have lots of contracting options. We should have lots of room for grain this fall. We thank you for your continued business and supporting us since November 1982! Hard to believe it's almost 40 years.

We have some new faces in the office and in our trucks. Be sure to introduce yourself.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please give us a call. ■

We all work together to achieve the same goal, bountiful and plentiful crops to feed our animals.



John Deere applicator



Construction of scale, office, chemical shed and dike

Marathon Feed & Grain Nutrition Staff



Jacklyn Booth, Livestock Production Specialist of Marathon Feed & Grain | 715-443-5225

Samantha Rasmussen, Livestock Production Specialist of Marathon Feed & Grain | 715-443-5249



Hello! My name is **Jacklyn Booth** and I am a Livestock Production Specialist with Purina Animal Nutrition working for Marathon Feed & Grain. **I began working with Marathon Feed & Grain in June of this year.** Prior to that, I graduated in May from Cornell University

with a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Animal Science with a focus in Dairy Nutrition, Dairy Herd Management, and a minor in Business.

Previously to moving to Wisconsin, I lived in New York and grew up working on my family's dairy farm. There we have two Lely robots and a Lely Vector. Most summers up until college, I worked in all areas of the farm from treating animals to running around in tractors. Here I gained an appreciation for agriculture and realized that was the direction I eventually wanted to pursue. With that I competed in many dairy cattle shows which eventually brought me to Wisconsin for World Dairy Expo. After getting a taste of what this big dairy state had to offer, I saw a possible future here! From there I decided to attend Cornell.

While at school, I worked in Mike VanAmburgh's lab, learning some of the nitty-gritty details of dairy nutrition and herd management. **The summer of 2019 I interned down in Florida at a feed mill and cow dairy farm.** This brought me to a Purina LPS that made me realize I wanted to eventually be apart of the Purina Checkerboard. Following that, in the summer of 2020 where the COVID pandemic was at its worst, I spent my time managing my family's dairy farm. I worked at fine tuning the robots, playing with different diets, and creating SOPs to ensure the farm was performing to its full potential.

Although I was sad to leave the family farm, I am looking forward to applying all of my experiences and knowledge to help farms throughout Wisconsin. I am proud to be apart of two companies that provide a plethora of products that not only aid farmers in solving problems, but also help them achieve their own personalized goals! **Give me a call and I will look at all the options nutritionally that are available to assist you. ■**



Hi! My name is **Samantha Rasmussen** and I am an Animal Nutritionist with Purina Animal Nutrition working for Marathon Feed & Grain. **I have been working as a Nutritionist with Purina at Marathon Feed & Grain since July 2020.** I work with all types of ruminants from dairy to beef cattle, as well as calves and

goats. **I joined the team shortly after I graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale with my master's degree in Ruminant Nutrition and Genomics.** I also completed my undergraduate degree at UW-Platteville in 2018. While at UWP, I worked on a student research team evaluating sauerkraut juice in calf diets.

While at SIUC, I taught a wide range of classes ranging from Beef Cattle Management to Forages, managed the school's beef unit, and worked with our annual bull test station. The beef unit typically ran about 75 head, and the bull test station had the capacity of 80 head. My Master's thesis was, **"Predicting feed efficiency in beef cattle; a comparison of direct measures, expected progeny differences, and single nucleotide polymorphism methodologies"**. Summer of 2019, I was back at UW-Platteville working with faculty and managing a research herd of grazing, Holstein cows on the University Farms.

A little about myself; I was born and raised in the small town of Pecatonica, Illinois. My grandparents have a century farm in West Bend, Wisconsin that was an active dairy farm until 2011. Currently, my uncle utilizes the land for cropping. Growing up, the barn was my favorite place to be when visiting. In my spare time, I enjoy oil painting during the winter months, or you can often find me fishing at my family's cabin near Tomahawk, WI.

What I really enjoy about this job is getting to go out and meet new people and producers daily and working with customers to help them succeed and reach their goals. I love facing new challenges and finding effective solutions to any problems that customers may be experiencing. No two days are the same when working in the agriculture industry, and not knowing what the next day will bring is a highlight of working at Marathon Feed & Grain. This first year has been a whirlwind for me, but also very educational and exciting. I can't wait to see what comes next, or even tomorrow. **If you need nutrition help or another set of eyes on your herd, give me a call. ■**



Grain Update

by Paul Kerber, VP of Grain
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We are quickly approaching what will hopefully be another good harvest for our area. **In some areas we have been getting a very good balance of rain and heat to maximize yield potential.** In other areas we have been squeaking by with enough moisture. Hopefully we can get a few more rainfalls in August and September to finish out the corn and soybean crops strong.

Prices are still strong but off the highs a little.

There is optimism on the overall production on corn and beans this year. It seems that the further north and west you go in the grain belt, the hotter and dryer you get and the further south and east you go, the wetter it gets. There is optimism that the good crops in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio will offset potential losses that we will see in North and South Dakotas. The drought monitor continues to push into Minnesota, but reports.

Corn prices have steadied out a bit as we try to figure out what kind of a crop we have. **USDA is still predicting a trendline yield of 179.5 bpa for the 2021 harvest.** They are predicting that demand will remain robust for 2021/2022 and that acres planted were slightly higher than what they thought in their June report. Export sales have been quiet for the past few weeks leaving some uncertainty over what kind of demand we will see in harvest 2021 and beyond.

Soybean prices continue to be fairly volatile. **USDA is also predicting a trendline yield of 50.8 bpa for the 2021 harvest.** Prices should remain supported by a relatively low ending stocks number for the 2021/2022 harvest of 155 million bushels. This is relatively low compared to historical numbers. **South America had some production problems in 2021 which led to more demand that came to the United States, which moved more beans out of country faster than anticipated.** We will have to keep an eye on this October/November as South America begins planting soybeans to see if there are any production issues again this year. Given the tight supply in the United States, the world supply could be of concern if there are production problems in South America again.

We are preparing our facilities for the upcoming harvest. We have many upgrades to facilities to increase reliability and speed for this harvest. It appears that we will need to be ready to handle a lot of bushels this harvest and we look forward to helping you harvest your crops. **Please call if you have any questions about grain prices and handling procedures.** Have a safe and bountiful harvest! ■

CORN				
		Million Acres		
Area Planted	89.7	90.8	91.1 *	92.7 *
Area Harvested	81.3	82.5	83.5 *	84.5 *
		Bushels		
Yield per Harvested Acre	167.5	172.0	179.5 *	179.5 *
		Million Bushels		
Beginning Stocks	2,221	1,919	1,107	1,082
Production	13,620	14,182	14,990	15,165
Imports	42	25	25	25
Supply, Total	15,883	16,127	16,122	16,272
Feed and Residual	5,898	5,725	5,700	5,725
Food, Seed & Industrial 2/	6,288	6,470	6,615	6,615
Ethanol & by-products 3/	4,857	5,050	5,200	5,200
Domestic, Total	12,186	12,195	12,315	12,340
Exports	1,777	2,850	2,450	2,500
Use, Total	13,963	15,045	14,765	14,840
Ending Stocks	1,919	1,082	1,357	1,432
Avg. Farm Price (\$/bu) 4/	3.56	4.40	5.70	5.60

	2019/20	2020/21 Est.	2021/22 Proj.	2021/22 Proj.
			Jun	Jul
SOYBEANS				
		Million Acres		
Area Planted	76.1	83.1	87.6 *	87.6 **
Area Harvested	74.9	82.3	86.7 *	86.7 **
		Bushels		
Yield per Harvested Acre	47.4	50.2	50.8 *	50.8 **
		Million Bushels		
Beginning Stocks	909	525	135	135
Production	3,552	4,135	4,405	4,405
Imports	15	20	35	35
Supply, Total	4,476	4,680	4,575	4,575
Crushings	2,165	2,170	2,225	2,225
Exports	1,679	2,270	2,075	2,075
Seed	96	102	104	104
Residual	12	4	15	15
Use, Total	3,952	4,545	4,420	4,420
Ending Stocks	525	135	155	155
Avg. Farm Price (\$/bu) 2/	8.57	11.05	13.85	13.70



Dorchester Grain Plant



Brokaw Grain Plant



Back to “Normal”

by Heather Barrows, VP of Retail-West
heatherb@rivercountrycoop.com
651-216-6510

People are on the move... after a year where the world seemed to stand still, this summer feels like “normal”! The stores kicked off their busy season Memorial Day weekend, with the northern stores cashing in on all the cabin dwellers. We then moved into the music festivals, where our Jim Falls, Cadott, Eau Claire Travel Center, and Ferry St. stores had a nice influx of sales and some interesting customers to boot! During Rock and Country Fests, the Cadott



and Jim Falls stores sold 1,700 cases of beer, 4,000 packs of cigarettes, and 41,000 gallons of gas. Cars are on the roads this summer and it is wonderful for the stores.

The hotel has also benefited from people traveling this summer. We are selling out most weekends, which is a big change from last summer. **We have finished up some of our updates in our pool area, with new tile, paint, new furniture, and a resurface of the hot tub.**



Cars are on the roads this summer and it is wonderful for the stores.

We continually work on updating all of our stores on the exterior to keep a modern look that has “curbside appeal”. We have ascertained that doing preventative maintenance and annual replacement on items such as pavement, HVAC and electronic items, saves a considerable amount of money long term and reaps benefits. When people look at our stores, they want to stop and shop. We are fortunate to have an in-house construction crew and maintenance technicians. Some of our agronomy personnel can perform many of these tasks in the off-season without outside vendor help. This saves our co-op a considerable amount of money and



provides full-time jobs year-around for agronomy staff.

Looking forward, we are up-to-date on all our state and federal regulations regarding fuel dispenser systems, a federal law that has an October 2021 deadline. While more than 50% of our business is transient, we buy local products as much as we can to support our area farmers and ranchers.

Thank you to all of our farmers for the quality food you provide to our cooperative. ■

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NEW PHONE APP
TODAY FOR SPECIAL
OFFERS AS A
REWARD MEMBER



Cadott c-store getting a new roof



Out with the Old and In with the New

by Brad Podevels, VP of Retail-East | bradp@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-897-2822

After a year of planning and designing, the new Merrill C-Store has finally come to fruition. The 3,500 sq foot store is set to open on August 19th with a grand opening planned for August 25th.

Construction started back in April on the new building with demo on the existing structure back in June. Our old store was outdated and not up to code so this new store will be all up-to-date.

River Country Merrill C-store will now give us the opportunity to better serve our customers and the community of Merrill.

Inside store offerings include Hot Stuff pizza, breakfast burritos and sandwiches, burgers, wings, a fully stocked beer cave, live bait, novelties, coffee and soda bar, dairy products, as well as many other convenience necessities. Outside offers Cenex top tier fuels including 91 octane No/Ethanol premium gas, 87 octane No/Ethanol gas and 87 octane with/Ethanol gas, Roadmaster Premium Diesel and Fieldmaster off road dyed diesel and LP exchange.

This new store will be a good asset for the co-op and will serve the Merrill customers for many years. ■



**MERRILL
CENEX**

GRAND OPENING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25TH

11AM – 3PM

1300 N. CENTER AVENUE, MERRILL

RIBBON CUTTING @ 10:30AM

LIVE RADIO 11AM - 1PM

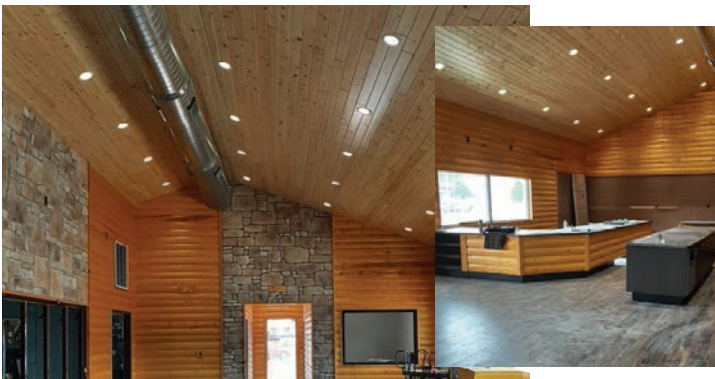
FREE BRAT/PIZZA WITH REWARDS CARD

SIGN UP TO WIN \$50 CENEX GIFT CARDS

(WINNERS DRAWN EVERY HOUR)

BALLOONS FOR KIDS

FULL SERVICE AT PUMPS



Merrill c-store under construction - August 2021



New blacktop at Dorchester c-store



Choosing a Propane Provider

by David Hartley, VP of Energy | davidh@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-492-0987

You have a lot of choices when it comes to Propane providers, so why choose River Country Co-op as your provider?

Safety

A lot of companies say they believe in safety, and at River Country Co-op, we live it. All of our delivery drivers and service technicians are CETP certified. CETP or Certified Employee Training Program is a national training program ensuring that our employees know how to handle propane safely. We perform leak tests on all new systems and any existing system that has been serviced.

Reliability

Our drivers take pride in what they do. They care about your delivery and work hard to ensure your deliveries are made in a timely manner.

Technology

We utilize Edge Routing & Degree Day System which uses the latest technology. It uses your past history combined with current weather conditions to predict your usage. We also have tank monitoring available giving you the ability to monitor your tank from your computer or cell phone. It gives you an "eye" on your tank and can even send you a text if your tank gets low (monthly fee may apply).

Contracting Options

We offer contracting options to lock in your price for the winter to insulate you from potentially higher prices during the peak of winter demand.

Assurance Plus Program

The Assurance Plus Program takes your usage history, locks in your price for the year and divides your payments into 12 equal payments eliminating any surprises.

No Annual Lease Fee

We charge no annual fee (with minimum annual usage).

Free Tank Switch Out

We will swap out a competitor's tank, pump over the gas in the new tank and do a leak test all at no charge to you.

24-hour Emergency Service

We have staff on-call 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

On-line Ordering

You have the option of ordering your propane on-line vs calling the office.

At River Country Co-op, we strive to provide you with the best service possible. No gimmicks, just people working hard for you. ■

LAST YEAR, WE...

- installed 9,873 feet of copper and plastic tubing
- set 362 LP tanks for new customers



New fuel truck built and completed this last February



New service truck coming in September



Jon Schroeder filling a home tank



Avoid Costly Downtime with Routine Engine Oil and Hydraulic System Maintenance

by John Holdsworth, Certified Energy Specialist
johnh@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-897-2006



Changing hydraulic and engine fluids in your equipment is an important maintenance procedure that can't be neglected.

Hydraulic Fluid & Engine Oil

Over time, hydraulic fluids/engine oils lose their effectiveness as antiwear additives are use up. Moisture and dirt buildup can cause corrosion and wear on gears, hydraulic pumps and other moving parts. Overheating the system can damage seals, allow deposits to form and cause the fluid to breakdown.

Suggested simple tips to minimize contamination and overheating by:

- Checking fluid levels regularly
- Fixing leaks promptly
- Serving the hydraulic/oil system as recommended

Why should you change your Hydraulic Fluids & Engine Oil?

- Reduce chances of have a hydraulic system failure
- Remove contaminants that may have accumulated during operation
- Increase Performance
- Save on repair costs and downtime ■



Abbotsford • Marathon City • Owen



Preferred Stock Program For All River Country Co-op Stock Holders

We have a new program called the **Preferred Stock Program**. Preferred stock certificates or "PSC" is stock in the coop that you would earn as a patron, only this stock is paid a guaranteed dividend (interest).

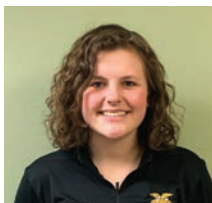
Interest (dividends) on the stock program will have a **floor of 2% and a cap dividend maximum of 8%**. The interest rate formula will be determined by the Prime Lending Rate of the Federal Government as posted in the Wall Street Journal minus 1.75%.

The initial interest rate (dividend) will be 3%. This will be guaranteed until December, 2021. Stock certificates will be issued at a minimum of \$5,000, with increments of a minimum of \$5,000. There is a \$250,000 maximum and the co-op will offer the certificates on a first come, first serve basis with a cap of 5 million dollars issued.

INTERESTED IN MORE INFORMATION?

CONTACT US AT { 800-828-9395 | 800-521-2021 }
(Chippewa Falls) (Owen)

2021 Scholarship Recipients



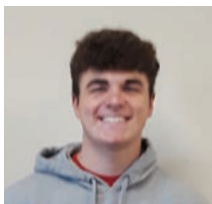
Haley Adkins

Graduated: Stanley-Boyd High School
Future Education: UW River Falls
Intended Degree: Animal Science w/ Equine emphasis
Hobbies/Activities: Fishing, riding horses and working on family farm



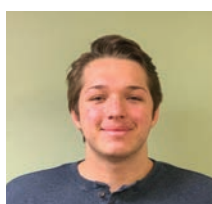
Jordan Gilles

Graduated: Cadott High School
Future Education: Cornell University
Intended Degree: Animal Science & Veterinary Pharmacology
Hobbies/Activities: Showing cattle, archery, drawing, painting & traveling



Westen Cade Schmitz

Graduated: Greenwood High School
Future Education: UW Madison
Intended Degree: Mechanical Engineering
Hobbies/Activities: Golfing & video games



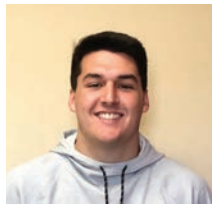
Tristen Harder

Graduated: New Auburn High School
Future Education: UW Milwaukee
Intended Degree: Civil Engineering
Hobbies/Activities: Football, basketball & video games



Isabelle Clark

Graduated: Cornell High School
Future Education: UW Superior
Intended Degree: Secondary Education w/ English emphasis
Hobbies/Activities: Softball, basketball, kayaking, fishing, hunting showing horses and helping on her 4th generation family dairy farm



Jonah Hinker

Graduated: Greenwood High School
Future Education: Milwaukee School of Engineering
Intended Degree: Mechanical Engineer
Hobbies/Activities: Hunting, fishing, baseball, listening to music & being with friends



McKenzie Derks

Graduated: Stanley-Boyd High School
Future Education: CVTC
Intended Degree: Entrepreneurship - to start a local business in her community
Hobbies/Activities: Kayaking, softball, hunting and fishing



Taylor Lindsay

Graduated: Cadott High School
Future Education: UW La Crosse
Intended Degree: Physician Assistant
Hobbies/Activities: Showing cattle, 4H, FFA & helping on family beef farm



Monica Derks

Graduated: Stanley-Boyd High School
Future Education: CVTC
Intended Degree: Business Mgmt. - to start her Agricultural Business
Hobbies/Activities: Kayaking, softball, hunting and 4-wheeling



Kendal Noel

Graduated: Wildlands Research School
Future Education: UW River Falls
Intended Degree: Animal Sciences w/ Vet Medicine emphasis
Hobbies/Activities: 4H, kayaking, hiking the Big Horn Mountains & helping on the family farm



Chloe Ertl

Graduated: Medford Senior High
Future Education: Northcentral Technical College
Intended Degree: Agribusiness
Hobbies/Activities: Enjoys FFA



Mya Ruesch

Graduated: Abbotsford High School
Future Education: UW River Falls
Intended Degree: Elementary Education
Hobbies/Activities: Volleyball, basketball, track & babysitting

continued... →

2021 Scholarship Recipients

continued...



Zachary Steinmetz

Graduated: Bloomer High School
Future Education: UW Stout
Intended Degree: Construction Mgmt.
Hobbies/Activities: Hunting, fishing, football & basketball



Ryan Stunkel

Graduated: Thorp High School
Future Education: UW Platteville
Intended Degree: Agribusiness/Animal Science
Hobbies/Activities: Ag business club, hunting & fishing



Emily Syverson

Graduated: Chippewa Falls High School
Future Education: UW River Falls
Intended Degree: Animal Science w/ Meat Animal emphasis
Hobbies/Activities: Figure skating, 4H, showing horses & helping on family beef farm

Interested in receiving a
RiverCountry CO-OP **Scholarship?**

New applications coming
January, 2022

Co-op Philanthropy



Donation to the Merrill Area Food Pantry



Donation to the St. Anthony Catholic School funding a new digital outdoor sign



Donation to the Merrill High School funding their Farm to Plate Program



Donation to the Lake Holcombe school district funding an updated weight room available to students and also the public



Donation to the Flambeau Forever Foundation which provides sports clinics, painting lessons, books, athletic equipment and educational trips

Meet Some Interns at the Co-op



Raleigh Frankewicz

Nutrition & Feed Internship at the Owen Mill

Description of internship:

In this internship, I have been riding along with sales professionals doing farm visits. I have learned how to shake out

a ration, screen manure, test forages, test pH in urine, formulate a ration, collect samples, answer phone calls, take orders, bag feed, and identify health issues.

What encouraged you to be in this field of study?

I did not grow up on a farm but I have an agricultural background. My family owns Joe's Refrigeration out of Withee, where we sell milking equipment, do commercial refrigeration and install clean rooms throughout the United States. I got into this field because I love working with animals and learning all about agriculture. I also really like the nutrition side of things because you get to help farmers increase their quality of milk through our hands.

What degree do you intend achieving from college?

Agricultural Business and Dairy science degree from the University of Wisconsin Platteville.

Personal interests and hobbies outside of work and school:

I shoot trap on a league, I like to spend time on the lake at our cabin, be with my family, watch sports and travel! ■



Sarah Anderson

Agronomy Internship at Athens

Description of internship:

During this internship, I've been able to mix fertilizer, load trucks, help with administrative and billing tasks, scout fields and pull soil samples.

What encouraged you to be in this field of study?

I am from Antigo, Wisconsin, and grew up on a small operating dairy farm that switched to only cash cropping in the late 2000's.

What degree do you intend achieving from college?

Crop and Soil Science degree with an emphasis in crops from the University of Wisconsin River Falls. My current plans after graduation include obtaining my CCA and working as a Crop Consultant or in an Agronomist position.

Personal interests and hobbies outside of work and school:

Some of my interests include hiking, fishing, spending time with family and friends, and shooting sporting clays. At River Falls, I am involved in the Crops and Soils Club and currently hold the Treasurer position. ■



Sarah Anderson and Elizabeth McGuire at the Northern Wisconsin State Fair booth in Chippewa Falls



Griffen Mlsna and Raleigh Frankewicz at the Wisconsin Valley Fair booth in Wausau



1080 West River Street
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Contact us...

12 Mile CENEX
(715) 532-9654

Abbotsford NAPA
(715) 223-6371

Agri-Tech/Bloomer Grain
(715) 568-2934

Antigo Country Store
(715) 623-3516

Athens Agronomy
(715) 257-7676

Athens CENEX
(715) 257-7587

Athens Feed Mill
(715) 257-7591

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

Brokaw Grain
(715) 870-2455

Cadott CENEX Truckstop
(715) 289-3953

Chippewa Falls CENEX
(715) 723-7005

Chippewa Falls Main Office
(715) 723-2828

Cornell Country Store
(715) 239-3173

Dorchester Agronomy
(715) 654-5401

Dorchester CENEX
(715) 654-5559

Dorchester Grain
(715) 654-6065

Eau Claire Ferry St. CENEX
(715) 832-0045

Eau Claire Third St. CENEX
(715) 835-2003

**Eau Claire Travel Center
- 29 Pines Restaurant & Bar**
(715) 874-2929
- CENEX Store
(715) 874-0290
**- Sleep Inn & Suites
Conference Center**
(715) 874-2900

Edgar CENEX
(715) 352-2414

Gilman CENEX
(715) 447-5746

Greenwood CENEX
(715) 267-6105

Jim Falls CENEX
(715) 382-4554

Lake Holcombe CENEX
(715) 595-4112

Marathon Agronomy
(715) 443-6100

Marathon City NAPA
(715) 443-3460

Marathon Feed & Grain
(715) 443-2424

Merrill CENEX
(715) 536-5600

Merrill Country Store
(715) 536-2491

New Auburn CENEX
(715) 967-2171

Owen Agronomy
(715) 229-4621

Owen Feed Mill
(715) 229-4613

Owen Main Office
(715) 654-5134

Owen NAPA
(715) 229-2181

Prairie Farm CENEX
(715) 455-1490

Sheldon Agronomy
(715) 452-5242

Sheldon CENEX/Shop
(715) 452-5111

Sheldon Feed Mill
(715) 452-5116

Weyerhaeuser CENEX
(715) 353-2612