

AUGUST
2022

RiverCountry CO-OP

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YOUR GUIDE TO LOCAL FARMING NEWS & MORE

Co-op Update

As I write this, the days are slowly getting a little shorter and some mornings you can feel fall is right around the corner. With our short spring weather, this past summer seems to be shorter and hence the old saying, "the older you get, the faster they go". Company wise, the past six to twelve months have been challenging in terms of weather related events, staffing (qualified labor shortages), COVID protocols, inflationary increases on commodities and some extraordinary expenses to name a few. While some of these issues were anticipated and plans were made to prepare, some of the changes that occurred exponentially challenged our internal cooperatives' resources. Here are some highlights and recap of the last six months.

The month of August for your co-op is the last month in our business fiscal year. **Sales or total revenue is expected to be in excess of \$350 million this year.** Overall, revenue is up in the 20%+ range over last year as a comparison. As well as some volume increases, there are some inflation increases in commodities. The net savings at this point in time are forecasted to be comparable to last year. Going into the last quarter of our business year, we were similar in profit as a percentage and we feel confident our 4th quarter earnings will be comparable to last year.

In August, we will be sending out a special stock redemption to the former Heartland stockholders who were 70+ years old, who signed up during the merger timeline established in 2019. The River Country Co-op stockholders have had all age 70 requests and estates settled and total stock retirement

distributions this year will be around five hundred thousand dollars.

Energy volumes this past year are up in the 10% range...

The weather has had some impact on your cooperative as a colder than normal spring prolonged our energy sales but challenged our agronomy as our planting dates were pushed back 1-2 weeks on average. **Energy volumes this past year are up in the 10% range** as we picked up new business and the advent of cold spring weather positively impacted sales. Prebuy program volumes were up considerably as well as new propane tank sets this past year. We also purchased some new propane trucks, which has improved our efficiency and lowered our truck expenses.

In agronomy, we were challenged by several events, the main one being the weather. Intermittent days of rain and high winds prevented application on a timely basis and combined with the late spring start, this pushed manpower and equipment to the max as we went through the spring/summer. **At one point last spring, your agronomy division was applying 60 semi loads of fertilizer per day.**

Throughout the year we continually made adjustments and purchased some new equipment mid-season to try and offset the application challenges and some unexpected breakdowns. As we faced our own labor shortage challenges with retirements and changes, we used

all the synergies of available staff in other departments. We have added some new talent during the course of the last couple of months; most notably some new agronomists in several areas and a location and sales management position in Bloomer agronomy, Joe Salter.

In grain, the rising price of grain commodities was at the forefront.

Market pricing of corn and soybeans saw the increased need for higher credit levels and logistical transportation challenges from 2021 carried forward into 2022. This past summer, our VP of grain, Paul Kerber, accepted another position with a grain company in the cities and I promoted from within the company and named Nathan LeMay as Paul's replacement. This prompted other job description changes in the grain department for other staff members. As we head into September, we have a full staff ready to handle the grain season ahead of us.

The Co-op feed division continues to see increases in volume.

New marketing programs, proprietary milk replacer and feed supplements have assisted in unit increases. We have seen some notable long-term employees retire this year, especially in the Athens feed department with Ken, Tim and Ray. We wish them well in their future endeavors. As some have retired, we have added some new younger talent eager to work with existing mentors in our feed nutrition staff.

The summer tourist season is well underway. **We have seen record crowds at the music fests in our area, and that has reflected in our sales in our convenience stores.** In spite of the record high petroleum

by Bruce Mlsna, CEO



prices, store traffic counts remain consistent with similar years. In the hospitality area, revenue levels at the hotel are up around 15% and the restaurant revenues are comparable. Co-op revenues in this division are expected to be over ninety million dollars this year.

In spite of the record high petroleum prices, store traffic counts remain consistent with similar years.

As we look ahead to fall, we have committed to some equipment purchases to continually upgrade in several areas. With the supply disruptions, we have been proactively ordering trucks, application equipment and different attachments. We are preparing for grain harvest by investing in a new bin replacement in Dorchester as well as some upgrades and fixes in other locations. Other locations are scheduled for investments to improve technology, equipment and/or appearance.

On the philanthropic side, we have donated more than \$50,000 in the past six months to various charities and organizations. In March, we gave out over \$5,000 in scholarships to multiple seniors who wish to pursue higher education post high school. This past summer, we have hosted five internships for those young people interested in energy, feed and agronomy careers. This is part of our process to get the next generation of younger people interested in cooperatives and agriculture.

Thanks for your business. I hope your fall harvest goes well. ■



Ribbon cutting for an electronic charging station at the Cadott truckstop.



2022 River Country Co-op Board Members



Hosted Business After Hours for the Chippewa Falls Chamber at our Sleep Inn & Suites Conference Center.



Home Heating

by Brad Lieders, Credit Manager
bradl@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-654-6705

homeenergy+

CFA



Rabo
Agrifinance



JOHN DEERE
FINANCIAL

CHS

Price increases have impacted everyone over the past year. Your winter home heating costs are no exception. There may be state home heat assistance funds available for you, a family member, or a friend. To determine eligibility or apply for these available funds, call Wisconsin Energy Assistance at 866-432-8947 or go to energyandhousing.wi.gov. Please note that it can take Energy Assistance up to 30-days to process an application.

Who is eligible for Energy Assistance and Weatherization Assistance? Your household may be eligible for the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) based on a number of factors. If your household gross income is less than the amount shown on the following chart, you may be eligible for a benefit or services.

Household Size	ONE Month	Annual Income
1	\$2,591.92	\$31,103
2	\$3,389.42	\$40,673
3	\$4,186.92	\$50,243
4	\$4,984.42	\$59,813
5	\$5,781.92	\$69,383
6	\$6,579.42	\$78,953
7	\$6,729.00	\$80,748
8	\$6,878.50	\$82,542

Here is an energy saving tip for you: during winter months, change your furnace filter frequently. A dirty filter makes your furnace work harder which can reduce its efficiency and life expectancy.

Save Time and Go Green

Are you tired of opening mail and writing out checks? To have your monthly statement emailed to you, just provide your name and account number to theresa@rivercountrycoop.com or call 715-654-5134. To pay your account online with your bank account, go to rivercountrycoop.com. When you are on the website, click on "My Account" in the upper right-hand corner, then "River Country Member Portal", and then "First time sign on" to get started.

Plan Now, Spring Will Come Fast

Producers, though we are wrapping up the 2022 growing season, now is the time to get your input plans in place for your 2023 planting. River Country Co-op has a number of convenient finance options with good terms. We recently added Rabo Agrifinance to your available options. You can also use John Deere Multi-Use Account, CHS Capital

or Cooperative Finance Association (CFA). Contact me or your nearest River Country Agronomy location to learn more about supplier special financing from Rabo and John Deere with interest rates as low as 0%.

We Are Here for You

If needed, I am here to help you with your account. Whether it be discussing financing options for your inputs, or working with you on a payment arrangement on a past due balance, you can reach out to me. It is always to your advantage to contact River Country prior to receiving a call from the credit department if your account is past due.

Have a great fall and thank you for your business! ■



WISCONSIN
Help for
Homeowners

Get Help With Overdue Home Bills

How It Helps

The pandemic has financially impacted thousands of Wisconsin families.

If you're finding it hard to make ends meet, Wisconsin Help for Homeowners is a new statewide program that can help with overdue bills like your mortgage payment, property taxes, and utilities, including internet.

You can apply even if you haven't been sick with COVID-19.

Who Can Apply

If you Are a Home Owner:

- Single-Family Home
- Duplex
- Condo
- Manufactured Home

If you Have Been Financially Impacted by COVID-19:

- Fewer Paid Hours at Work
- Loss of Wages
- Job Loss
- Increased Household Costs

**Visit HomeownerHelp.WI.gov or call
1-855-2HOMEWI to learn more.**

Wisconsin Help for Homeowners is a program administered by the state of Wisconsin funded by the American Rescue Plan Act.

Grain Locations



Bloomer
715-568-2933



Boyd
715-667-3245



Athens
715-257-7591



Brokaw
715-870-2455



Dorchester
715-654-6065



Marathon Feed & Grain
715-443-2424



Sheldon
715-452-5116

RiverCountry CO-OP Retirements

Congrats to this group who has over 200 years of collective experience working for the Co-op.



Skip Licht
Bloomer Agronomy



Mark Brecke
Owen Feed



Karl Schreiner
Athens Agronomy



Ray Melander
Beef Specialist



Tim Hoff
Athens Feed & Handyman



Ken Gauerke
Athens Feed



Bill Kallstrom
Owen NAPA Manager



Agronomy Outlook

by Steve Hanvold, VP of Agronomy
steveh@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-492-0875

As we look forward to the fall of 2022 and reflect on the planting season, we see that it was another interesting year.

Government was, once again, involved in agriculture. The International Trade Commission (ITC) continued to uphold an antidumping lawsuit on phosphate fertilizer. This severely restricts imports from several countries and continues to make phosphate containing fertilizers in tight supply and higher priced. The ITC also entertained a similar lawsuit on liquid nitrogen this spring. That had a similar effect on nitrogen fertilizers. They have ruled against supporting this lawsuit. But the legal wrangling isn't over yet. **I would expect that nitrogen fertilizer pricing would relax a bit going into 2023 based on this.**

However, it's very difficult to know with any certainty. Ordinarily, high prices cure high prices. As prices rise, typically consumption goes down. The consumption part was true to a degree in 2022. While River Country Co-op's fertilizer tonnage was similar, the United States consumption was, as a whole, off from previous years.

While River Country Co-op's fertilizer tonnage was similar, the United States consumption was, as a whole, off from previous years.

The ongoing issues with logistics caused some major supply disruptions in our industry as well. There were rail disruptions that caused major disruptions for a period of time. This was supposed

to have stemmed from the layoffs that companies made due to COVID and the inability to hire an adequate number of trained employees back in time for normal operations to return. This, with less trucks and some barge/river interruptions, made supply a real challenge at times. Crop protection supply disruptions added to the challenges as well.

Many of the commonly used products were in extremely short supply this year. Glyphosate (Roundup), Metolachlor (Dual), 2,4-D and some insecticides were in very short supply this year. These are staples of our crop protection portfolios. Although it was challenging behind the scenes, we were able to stay pretty well supplied.

The timing of when spring "broke" made getting things done for both the co-op and growers difficult as well. **We got started almost a full month later than the previous two years.** Yet, we finished up at almost the same time. So, there was a lot being done in a relatively short period of time. My compliments to everyone for the hard work and getting it all done.

The growing season has been decent this year. Although I would suspect that most are behind the growth stage they were at this time last year. That doesn't necessarily mean this year is bad. We just need to remember how exceptional last year really was.

2023 should be a better supply year. While it's still too early to know and there's a bunch of things that can still go awry. But supply constraints seem to be easing a little bit and prices appear to be moderating a bit as well.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to everyone for their patience and patronage in 2022 and look forward to everyone doing well at harvest and into 2023. ■





New Agronomist

by Liam Gerl, Agronomist
liamg@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-382-3335

Hello, my name is Liam Gerl. I am the new Agronomist at the Marathon City location. I am originally from Green Bay and recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville with a degree in Agricultural business. I started in May and have been working at both Athens and Marathon City locations. My focus is on crop scouting, weed identification and plant nutrients. I will be stopping out this fall and introducing myself. I look forward to working with you! Outside of work, I enjoy sports, hunting, fishing and just being outside. ■



Welcome Connor

by Connor Justice, Agronomist
connorj@rivercountrycoop.com
715-933-0255

My name is Connor Justice and I am a new Agronomist for River Country at the Bloomer location. I am originally from Three Lakes, a small town in Northern Wisconsin. Growing up, I knew that I wanted to work in a profession where I spent most of my time working outdoors. I worked at an outdoor resort in Phelps, Wisconsin, for most of high school and in the summer and winter breaks while I was working on my Bachelor's degree.

I attended UW-Eau Claire, where I graduated with a Comprehensive Geology degree with an Emphasis in Environmental Science. During my undergrad, I traveled to South Dakota, Wyoming, New Mexico and Montana where we studied and mapped the geologic history of the area.

I started working with River Country in April of this year, and with a limited knowledge of agronomy, coming into the industry during the busiest time of the year has been a challenging but exciting experience. I primarily cover the Cadott/Boyd area assisting farmers with their spray and fertilizer needs. I look forward to working with farmers to help create a program that will not only be agronomically successful but financially successful as well.

I will be working on farm plans, mapping fields among other items. Any questions, please call me. ■





Introducing Joe

by Joe Salter, Director of Sales, Bloomer Agronomy Branch Manager
joes@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-797-4924

Hello! My name is Joe Salter. I joined the River Country agronomy team this August as Director of Sales and the Branch Manager for agronomy operations in Bloomer. I have been employed in the agronomy field for the last decade, most recently working as a seed sales manager and previously before that as an agronomist for a local co-op.

I live in Fall Creek on a small farm with my wife (Aron) and three children (Kouper-11, Braydy-9 and Rejee-6). In our free time, my family enjoys every aspect of the outdoors and competing in sports. We spend our summer on the ball diamond, fall on the gridiron and winter on the wrestling mat while sprinkling gymnastics in there too. We also love hunting, fishing, snowmobiling and an abundance of outdoor adventures.

I found my way into agriculture in a non-traditional fashion. I graduated from UW-Stout with a degree in Dietetics emphasizing on Human Nutrition. I worked for a few companies in sales and quickly found my way into agronomy sales. **Since working in agriculture, I found a passion for on-farm experiences and growing customer relationships.** Through my experiences in the seed sales industry, here are a few things I have found valuable to consider when purchasing seed:

- Plan early but be flexible in product choices.
- Use field data to steer your decisions.
- Take advantage of early discounts and cash options.

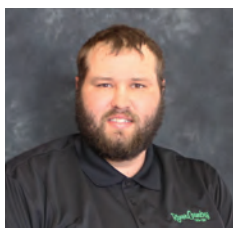
- Place orders early to ensure seed availability.
- Ask a River Country Sales Agronomist about new products and information.

I am looking forward to working with the River Country sales team as well as our members and patrons to build valuable relationships and help bring growth and success in a profitable manner. My office will be in Bloomer, but please feel free to stop in and/or if you have questions, reach out to me by cell, email or other. ■

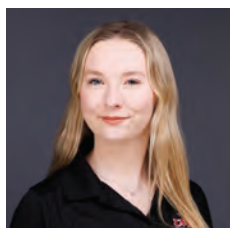
Since working in agriculture, I found a passion for on-farm experiences and growing customer relationships.

Our staff of Agronomists

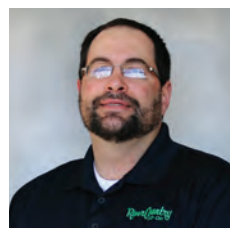
Call us for all your agronomic questions.



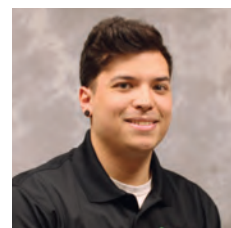
Nate Utecht
Athens



Sarah Anderson
Athens



Bill Buescher
Bloomer



Connor Justice
Bloomer



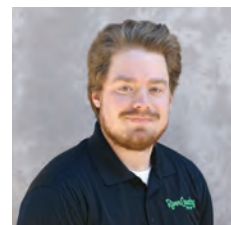
Kevin Giese
Bloomer



Jeremy Drewitz
Dorchester



Luke Peterson
Dorchester



Liam Gerl
Marathon City



Feed Updates

by Brian Streveler, VP of Feed
brians@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-226-5637

As we come to the close of another successful year at the co-op, it is time to look back at the past year and plan for the next. **This past year we have again seen double digit growth in sales and volume.** We have achieved this by continuing to invest in the right people and equipment to get the job done. To keep up with sales, the co-op has invested in new bulk delivery trucks. We have also made adjustments to our mills operating system and equipment to maximize efficiency through the Owen mill. **We have more improvements to make this fall, and additional bulk delivery units coming for the next year.** You will also see a new bag delivery unit, with new fork lift this fall for on farm bag delivery. Thank you all for your business.

This past year has also been a volatile year for the grain markets. Although volatility seems like the new normal, this year's market almost doubled from the harvest levels. Although crop size was adequate, we had factors show up that we don't normally see. With the invasion of Ukraine, we will be seeing less grain on the world market. Also, with the increase in fuel prices we have seen more demand for biofuels and increase in corn and soybean demand.

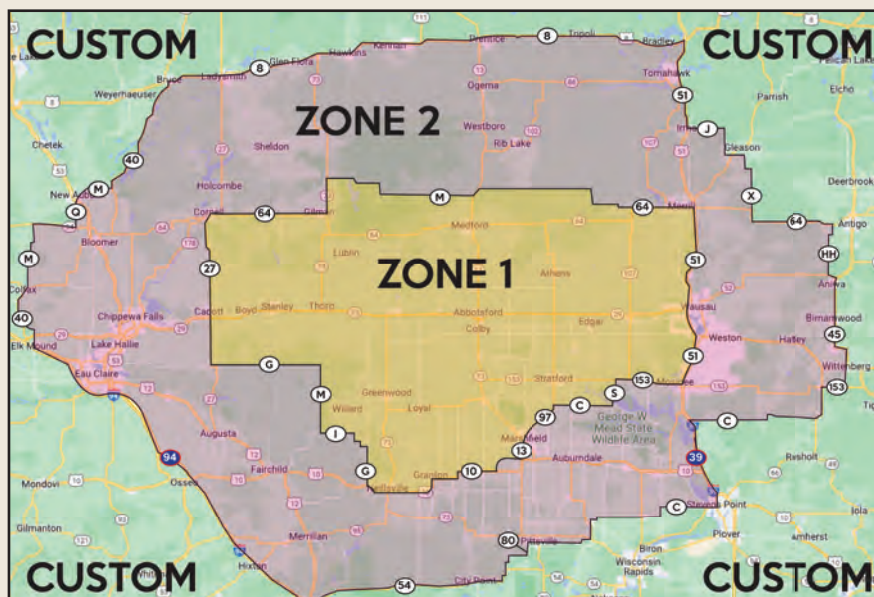
This year we have seen price increases in every product we use. In the last newsletter, we talked about the price of urea going up. This spring we are starting to see urea come back down. Unfortunately, most of our other ingredients have gone up from operating cost and transportation cost increases and shortages from our suppliers. The most extreme example is increases in the prices of blood meal. Last fall we were selling blood meal for \$1,100/ton, by this spring it was up to \$1,800/ton. In the past two months, blood meal has increased another \$600 per ton and we are being told our next load will cost \$3,200 per ton! At that level I don't think a person can justify feeding blood and I don't plan on buying it unless it comes back down.

With contracting for this next year, we will be looking for dips in the market for contracting opportunities. With the conflict in Ukraine, we will have higher market then we did last year. I think if we can get soybean meal numbers close to \$400 per ton contract, we should be contracting at least half of your protein needs. For corn I think the number to look for will be around \$205 to \$210.

This past spring, we have also made changes to our fork truck bag route system. We have five different delivery route areas. We are in every area weekly. Each area has a different day of the week that we deliver bags to with our delivery truck. Our delivery route area map is below. We need two working days notice to get your product made and delivered.

Delivery Day	Order By
Monday	Noon on Thursday
Tuesday	Noon on Friday
Wednesday	Noon on Monday
Thursday	Noon on Tuesday
Friday	Noon on Wednesday

We do charge a small stop fee. We prefer to handle pallet quantities but 1,000 lbs. is our minimum quantity. **We also offer a text service to remind our customers of their delivery day and that their order is due.** This reminder text will be received on the morning that the order is due. If you are interested in receiving text reminders, please contact our service desk at 715-229-4613. We still do bags that need to be hand unloaded but there is an extra charge for that service. **Please call customer service or your sales person with any questions at the Owen Mill Office: 715-229-4613 ■**





Cold Stress & Calves

by Angela Blume, Nutritionist
abrandner@landolakes.com | 715-314-0901

If you find yourself putting on a sweatshirt or jacket in the morning, chances are your calves are already experiencing cold stress. Even at a temperature of 60 degrees Fahrenheit, cold stress can cause calves to divert energy away from immune function and growth to regulate the calf's body temperature.

How to Keep Calves Thriving Until Warm Weather Returns

As winter approaches and temperatures fall, energy requirements to maintain calf body temperature and growth increase. The amount of energy a calf needs for maintenance increases by 1% for every degree below 60 degrees Fahrenheit. When calves nutritional requirements are not met, it can lead to weight loss and a compromised immune system.

The amount of energy a calf needs for maintenance increases by 1% for every degree below 60°F.

A calves increased energy needs cannot be met alone by increasing the fat levels in your calves nutrition in cooler weather. A 100% increase in fat alone in the diet may only yield a 12% increase in energy. Alternatively, a 50% increase in calf milk replacer powder with balanced fat and carbohydrates can generate a 50% increase in energy.

Increase Frequency of Feeding Dairy Calves

It's important to limit the time that calves aren't receiving nutrition when winter weather hits. A three times per day feeding program

(eight-hour increments) allows for more balanced energy intake. If it is not possible to feed 3 times a day, I would recommend feeding the 2nd feeding of the day as late as possible to give calves more energy throughout the cold wintery nights.

Increasing the amount of calf starter fed can help too. Calves can eat as much as 200% more starter during winter than compared to summer. Feed calf starter in small amounts more frequently throughout the day to keep it fresh, and choose a starter low in molasses to keep it from freezing.

Keep an eye on wintertime water intake, which will directly impact calf starter intake. Don't underestimate the level of dehydration associated with the lower relative humidity and dry air brought on by colder weather. Feeding calves warm water between 101°-102° F will encourage more consumption.

Maintain Calf Body Temperature

Cold drafts can result in lost body heat. Lost body heat means that more energy must be found to help maintain the calf's body temperature, limiting energy available for growth. You can use your bare hand to check for drafts or if you have a wind speed meter that can work as well. If you feel more than a slight air movement a draft may be present.

We can help calves conserve heat by using deep straw bedding. Use this bedding scorecard to evaluate if calf bedding packs are deep enough based on how much of the calf's legs show when laying down:

- 1 – All of the legs showing
- 2 – Half of the legs showing
- 3 – No legs showing



A score of one indicates it's time to add bedding to the pack, while a score of three is ideal. The "knee test" is a quick way to test if bedding is dry. If you put your knee down into the bedding and it stays dry, your calf bedding is fine. If your knee comes away wet, it's time to re-bed.

Calf jackets are also a simple and effective tool to help calves conserve heat. When using calf jackets as another level of protection, we need to make sure calves are dry before putting jackets on. If the calf is still damp you will need to change jackets after a few hours. As temperatures fluctuate, we should always check during the day to make sure calves are not sweating under their jacket. When calves sweat during the day they may still be wet at night and a damp calf uses more energy for maintenance.

For more information or if you would like help evaluating your calf program and maintenance requirements in the cold weather, give us a call. ■





Marathon Feed & Grain

by Todd Heise, GM of Marathon Feed & Grain
todcrishei@aol.com | 715-581-8889

Spring has come and gone, and we are well into summer, which is quickly passing us by. Hopefully the timely rains continue, and we can look forward to bumper crops like we had in 2021.

On the agronomy side of our business, our spraying and spreading acres have increased in 2022. We had so many in-row acres that we bought a new in-row spreader. The machine is a 2022 John Deere 400R. We had plans of replacing a floater spreader for next spring but by taking the in-row spreader now vs. ordering one for spring of 2023, we were able to save over \$50k. The first week we had the machine, we did over 1,600 acres and now we have a month in, and we have spread over 5,200 acres with the new machine. We also added 5,100 acres of new business to our in-row spreading. In addition, we are upgrading a sprayer that will be delivered soon. By buying the new sprayer after the spring spraying season, we were able to put hours on our current sprayer which will extend the life of the new sprayer.

We also added 5,100 acres of new business to our in-row spreading.

The new sprayer is 2022 John Deere 412R with 120 foot and individual nozzle shut offs and pulsation. Cost saving features include pressure recirculation primes the boom versus traditional boom prime where liquid tends to be sprayed out, saving 113.6 L (30 gal.) each time. If an operator does this process 10 times a

day, coupled with approximately (22.5 gal.) of solution savings with product reclaim one to two times per day, these two features together could save up to \$600* a day. This recirculation improves spray quality and reduces time at the start of spraying.

We did some upgrades to our fleet. We replaced one of our day cab semis with a newer used truck and have a new day cab on order. The new day cab was ordered 12 months ago. River Country Co-op also helped us refurbish one of our day cabs. This will have us ready for the harvest season.

We have introduced a new milk replacer **Land O Lakes® PrimeStart™ Beef Cross Milk Replacer** formulated to meet the specific needs of beef cross calves. Just like your dairy heifer calves, beef cross calves have unique nutritional needs to bring you the most value. Designed to get your beef cross calves off to the best start possible, Land O'Lakes® has developed PrimeStart™ Beef Cross Milk Replacer. It provides more effective and consistent dairy-beef cross calves to help you optimize the value of



your calves in the marketplace and drive palatability on your operation.

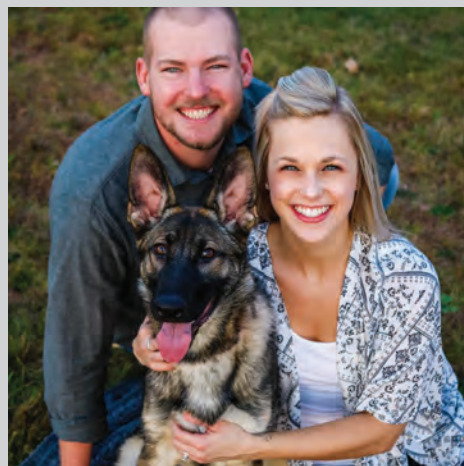
- **Strong Nutritional Foundation**
PrimeStart™ provides beef cross calves with a nutritional foundation that gives you the best opportunity to preserve added value potential for these cattle. It helps reduce animal size variability while improving overall calf health.
- **Better Start, Better Finish**
Calves fed PrimeStart™ were more blocky, heavier muscled and more muscular topped. *
- **Research Backed**
PrimeStart™ was developed based on hundreds of beef cross calves in numerous research trials, resulting in a formulation specifically designed to provide the best for your beef cross animals.

**Mix at 13.7% solids and feed 3 quarts twice daily or 2 quarts three times daily after colostrum feedings.*

...(continued on next page)

WELCOME to the team

Rusty Krautkramer has joined our Agronomy team. Rusty and his wife live in Marathon. When not at work, he enjoys hunting, fishing, golfing, and spending time with his family. We are excited to have Rusty as part of our MFG family!





A final mention, Marathon Feed will be celebrating their 40th year in business on November 15th. In 1982, Dale and Pat Heise, my parents, decided to buy a little feed mill in downtown Marathon City – many things have changed, but what stands true is our commitment to serving our customers with the very best service. We look forward to the celebration.

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

2022 John Deere 400R in-row spreader.



Refurbished truck



Nutrition Staff



Jacklyn Booth
715-443-5225



Samantha Rasmussen
715-443-5249



Grain Update

by Nathan LeMay, VP of Grain
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You may have noticed some new talent around the grain department this summer. We are excited to have Nate Eystad and Bob Bowe join our staff in Bloomer. Nate is a great resource with a well rounded background in both agronomy and marketing. Bob grew up farming in the Bloomer area, and has worked in multiple grain advisement roles before taking this job with River Country Co-op. Our grain marketing staff would love to hear from you and talk through an individualized plan that allows you to maximize your profits year after year.

I often hear that farmers feel like they are gambling when choosing the right time to market their grain.

The grain market has provided great opportunities over the past couple of years with higher than usual prices, but can still be challenging to navigate. I often hear that farmers feel like they are gambling when choosing the right time to market their grain. Fortunately, we can help alleviate some of this uncertainty through a number of great contracting options. One of my favorite things to do is sit down with a producer, enjoy a cup of coffee, and talk through different approaches that have helped or hindered their marketing plan over the years. Whether you are a multi-generation cash cropper or sold the cows last week, **it never hurts to talk through an updated marketing plan.**

One opportunity that will be worth looking out for this fall is our DP or Delayed Price contract. **This contract gives you the flexibility to price your grain when you are ready at a discount to the commonly used storage contract.** There are often great pricing opportunities between May and July when the grain market runs into a combination of new crop uncertainty and a lack of supply due to farmers focusing on field work. Our DP contract gives you the opportunity to carry that pricing potential past the influx of grain pouring into the market during the fall.

As we anticipate the upcoming harvest, we have been paying attention to how the crop is coming along. It is no secret that planting conditions were less than optimal for many this year. A cool and damp spring made for a rocky start. Not only did this weather pattern affect our

local crops, but many of the surrounding states as well. Planting went from being significantly behind to finding a small break in the weather where most of the U.S. was able to get caught up. I do not anticipate this harvest to produce the record yields that many farmers saw during 2021, but expect another strong fall ahead. As always, we hope River Country Co-op can be a part of your fall. Let us help make this your most profitable year yet! ■



New grain bin being built at the Dorchester grain plant.





Introducing Bob

by Robert Bowe, Grain Originator/Logistics and Operations Manager
robertb@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-797-8875

Hi, I'm Robert Bowe. My father, Jim Bowe, ran the family dairy farm with his brother, Tim. They took over the farm for their father, Ken, just north of Chippewa Falls, which is where I was raised. Shortly after graduating high school at McDonell Central, I joined the Air Force. There, I worked as a diesel and gas turbine generator mechanic for 4 years, spending time primarily stationed in Las Vegas, NV; but also did a short stint in Saudi Arabia. In 2008, I decided to go to college to pursue a degree in economics and eventually made my way into the Agriculture and Applied Economics program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Ag School. In 2018, **I went to work for Gavilon Grain in the Madison, Wisconsin, area.** There, I was the Location Coordinator, handling the shipment of grain to sales destinations and delivery of grain from farms during the harvest. Now with River Country Co-op, I will handle the trucking operation

as well as being a Grain Originator and Operations Manager. I'm married to Sarabeth and we have 6 kids; Leah, Vonell, Desi, Khloe, Jeremiah and Isabella. ■



Loading grain from storage bunker in Dorchester this spring.



Grain Buying

by Nate Eystad, Grain Originator
natee@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-579-0545

Nate Eystad here! I will be coming up on my second year here with the co-op. Working at River Country has taught me to be ready for anything! I have had the opportunity to work across our territory as an agronomist and in grain operations which has been a great experience, especially during planting and harvest seasons.

I am now stationed out of our Bloomer grain facility as a Grain Originator, and I couldn't be more excited! As fall approaches, we are gearing up to make your harvest as smooth and efficient as possible. We plan to work with our customers throughout harvest servicing all your needs from trucking, drying, and storing your bushels, to getting your grain to new markets that may be inaccessible.

As a grain buyer, I am going to provide you with a wide range of services from grain contracts and pricing of your grain to identifying key opportunities within our local markets.

Feel free to call any time. ■

**CALL US FOR GRAIN TRUCKING:
715-797-8875**





Greenwood & Athens Store Updates



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

Athens and Greenwood c-stores finally get their flex kit updates. After nine months of back ordered screens and EMV security chip readers, our petroleum company was able to get a shipment in and install at both locations at the end of July. **Both stores now have the ability to take debit cards and credit cards with chips along with our local cards at the pumps.** I think we all get a little frustrated when we are filling our fuel tanks and the credit card shuts off at \$75. Well, I have some good news, Cenex has negotiated with major credit card companies to up the limit to \$75 from \$150 when you fill at the pumps.

Athens has received a new facelift inside and out. Over the spring, the Athens c-store received a new look inside with tongue and groove walls, as well as a new coffee and soda bar, along with newly remodeled bathrooms. The outside of the building has a fresh new log siding look. Our goal is to make all of River Country c-stores uniform inside and out.

Sales in the convenience stores remained strong this past summer. Lottery and beer sales settled down from last year with fuel gallons up in many stores this year. With higher gas prices, the summer vacationers seemed to spend a little less money inside the stores as the cost of transportation dipped in to their budgets.

Inventory with distributors is slowly making a comeback with some products getting back to being fully stocked and other specialty items not as fast.

NAPA continues to have strong sales in the first half of 2022. Our annual filter sale was once again

a success in the spring at all three locations. Abbotsford continues to be one of NAPA's top sale stores in central Wisconsin in many categories.

Bill Kallstrom, our NAPA Owen manager, retired in July after working with NAPA Auto Parts for four decades. His replacement, Travis Oestreich, a former Abby NAPA employee, brings experience and stability to the Owen NAPA store. ■



Athens & Greenwood updated pumps



Athens C-store upgrades



Travis Oestreich, Owen NAPA manager ►



C-Store Update

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



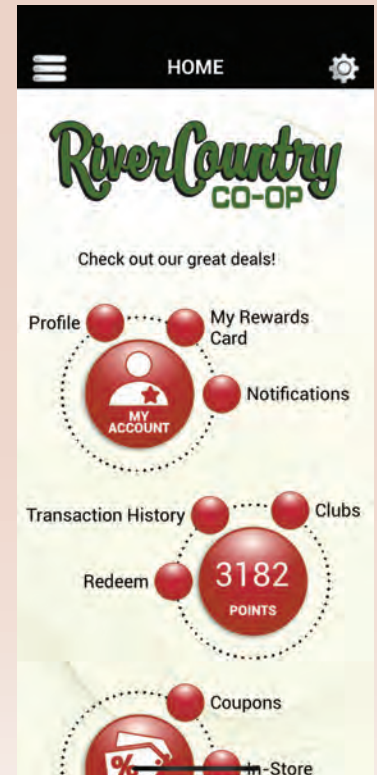
I love summer! Summer means heat, cabins, music festivals, fishing, boating and just being on the move! People being on the move means our stores are busy. **Everyone knows all businesses are facing challenges with staffing and inflation.** We certainly have as well; however, we are weathering the storm by managing our costs as best as we can and we continue to recruit employees through many different avenues.

Rock and Country Fests brought in record crowds which brought record days to our Cadott and Jim Falls c-stores. Cadott sold over 150 showers in three days. Between Cadott and Jim Falls, we sold approximately 2,000 cases of beer and approximately 4,900 packs of cigarettes. Even though gas prices were up a bit from last year, people still came out to enjoy their favorite acts.

This summer, our marketing efforts have been focused on "Free Gas"! We have been utilizing our local radio stations to

This summer our marketing efforts have been focused on "Free Gas"!

promote our phone app trying to let people know that they no longer have to carry a card around. When you sign up for the phone app, you get entered to win "free gas!" The phone app alerts customers to our current deals and lets them save everyday on fuel purchases. ■



Certified Energy Specialists



Jim Gawenda
715-255-7212



John Holdsworth
715-897-2006



Red Higgins
715-797-2252

For contracting, pricing, or new propane tank sets, give one of us a call!



Propane vs. Electricity

by David Hartley, VP of Energy
davidh@rivercountrycoop.com | 715-723-2828

It seems these days all politicians and government officials at every level seem to be entranced with pushing forward on clean energy:

shifting to an all-electric energy system. The idea may seem to make sense because fossil fuels and their carbon emissions have become a target for climate change, but does it really make sense? Let's compare the range and fueling times of the electric vehicle (EV) and the propane Autogas- fuel delivery vehicle.

...The idea may seem to make sense because fossil fuels and their carbon emissions have become a target for climate change, but does it really make sense?

Fueling Propane Autogas vehicles takes minutes, compared to hours to recharge an EV. Charging EVs takes up to 5 hours, keeping vehicles off the road for extended periods of time. Propane Autogas vehicles have a substantially longer range than EVs. Class 4-7 propane Autogas vehicles can achieve a range of up to 350 miles on a single fueling. Electric work trucks have a range of about 120 miles on a single charge.

Propane fueled appliances, equipment and LP gas vehicles burn cleaner and produce environmentally friendly emissions. Electricity has zero emissions, but the statement "electricity is 100% efficient" and/or "environmentally friendly" is

inaccurate due to its generation, delivery and production methods. Because electricity has to be produced from fossil fuels, it is not correct to say that electricity is the most environmentally friendly fuel available. Many people mistakenly believe this and can be misled without understanding all aspects of electrical power generation. **In the United States, 49% of all electricity is produced by the burning of coal.** If your hybrid-electric car is charged through coal fired electricity generation, the chances of making a positive impact on the environment are minimal. Therefore, the environmental impact of propane powered vehicles vs. electric vehicles can only be accurately compared based solely on the primary energy source of electric power generation. **Electricity has an effect called "line loss" which is the amount of electricity that is lost traveling through the power lines. Only about 38% of the power generated actually gets to the outlet.**

Consider the following:

- **Propane is more dependable than electric:** Propane can be stored safely in a tank on your property, while electricity is subject to power outages. Propane works when and where other energy sources don't—which makes it quite versatile.
- **Propane is clean:** Propane has long been recognized as the "green" energy. By using this exceptional energy, homeowners can help cut emissions

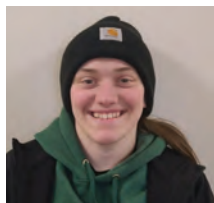
and protect the environment. Propane is an approved alternative fuel listed in both the Clean Air Act of 1990 and the National Energy Policy Act of 1992. Moreover, because propane is a gas heat, it doesn't spill, pool, or leave a residue.

- **Propane is safe:** Propane has quite a remarkable safety record, due in large part to the stringent codes and regulations developed by the propane industry and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Propane heat also has built-in safety properties. It won't ignite when combined with air unless the source of ignition reaches 940°F. Propane gas is non-toxic and produces natural emissions, and is not harmful to soil or water. With propane, what you see is what you get. While electricity is measured in hard-to-understand "kilowatt hours," propane is measured in familiar gallons.
- **Propane is cheaper than electric:** According to the U.S. Department of Energy, heating a home with propane in recent years has cost far less than heating with electricity. Even more surprising to many people is that propane water heaters can cost 30% less to operate because they can heat water twice as fast.

For propane or refined fuels questions, please give me a call or email. ■



2022 Scholarship Recipients



Alane Artac

Graduated: Greenwood High School
Future Education: Mid-State Technical College
Intended Degree: Ag Business & Science
Hobbies/Activities: Showing dairy and swine at Clark County Fair



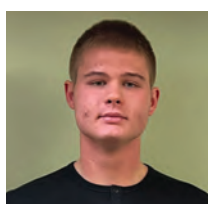
Abigail Iverson

Graduated: Bloomer High School
Future Education: UW-Madison
Intended Degree: Physical Education & Adaptive
Hobbies/Activities: Basketball, track & field, FCA and student council



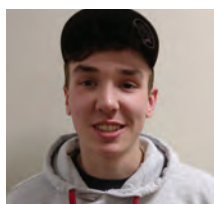
Cali Brown

Graduated: Merrill High School
Future Education: North Central Technical College
Intended Degree: Ag Business
Hobbies/Activities: Trap shooting, FFA President of her chapter



Cael Iverson

Graduated: Bloomer High School
Future Education: UW-River Falls
Intended Degree: Ag Business
Hobbies/Activities: Football, basketball, golf, FFA, FCA & FBLA



Aaron Dukelow

Graduated: Abbotsford High School
Future Education: UW-Madison
Intended Degree: Farm & Industry Short Course
Hobbies/Activities: Restoring vintage tractors with his dad and working on his family dairy farm of 450 cows



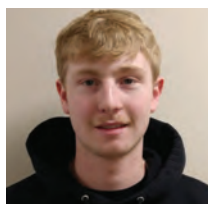
Madisyn James

Graduated: Gilman High School
Future Education: University of Minnesota Morehead
Intended Degree: Nursing
Hobbies/Activities: Realistic drawing, reading & basketball



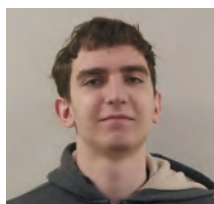
Justyne Frisle

Graduated: Prairie Farm High School
Future Education: UW-Madison
Intended Degree: Dairy Science with minor in Ag Business
Hobbies/Activities: Softball, basketball, hunting & fishing and helping on family dairy farm



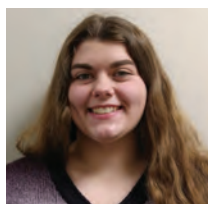
Kale Klussendorf

Graduated: Medford High School
Future Education: North Central Technical College
Intended Degree: Electrician
Hobbies/Activities: Basketball and helping on family beef farm



Isaac Hackel

Graduated: Marathon High School
Future Education: North Central Technical College
Intended Degree: Class A CDL
Hobbies/Activities: Enjoys welding locks and misc. engineering projects



Brooke Lebal

Graduated: Flambeau High School
Future Education: UW-Eau Claire
Intended Degree: History Education
Hobbies/Activities: Helping on family dairy farm, showing steer and pigs at county fairs and crocheting



Rachel Hager

Graduated: Fall Creek High School
Future Education: Iowa State University
Intended Degree: Culinary Food Science
Hobbies/Activities: Trap shooting, musicals and cooking



Jacob Matyka

Graduated: Rib Lake High School
Future Education: UW-River Falls
Intended Degree: Crop/Soil Science
Hobbies/Activities: Enjoys the outdoors, hunting, snowmobiling and motorcycle rides

2022 Scholarship Recipients



Jesse Rowe

Graduated: Greenwood High School
Future Education: Viterbo University
Intended Degree: Nursing
Hobbies/Activities: Reading mystery books & playing with her dog



Kenesha Schug

Graduated: Athens High School
Future Education: Northwood Technical College
Intended Degree: Architecture, Agricultural Design
Hobbies/Activities: Photography & spending time with her three dogs



Elizabeth Van Rixel

Graduated: Athens High School
Future Education: Concordia University
Intended Degree: Physical Therapy
Hobbies/Activities: Track, basketball, cross country, sewing/knitting & woodworking

Interested in receiving a
 **Scholarship?**

**New applications coming
 January, 2023**

Co-op Philanthropy



Donation to St. Joseph Catholic School in Boyd to purchase new playground equipment.



Donation to the Marathon School District to purchase needed updates to the watering system in the greenhouse.



Donation to Athens Area Ambulance Service to purchase a new power lift to help assist patients in and out of the ambulance.



Donation to Cornell Area Fire Department to purchase new fire-safe boots for the crew.



Donation to Hallie Firefighters Association to purchase new rescue equipment.



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