Tri-State Seed

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Tri State Seed Co LLC Newsletter June 2016

Editorial Comment

We certainly have a lot to be thankful for and good reason to be optimistic. I am thankful for the prospect of a bountiful harvest, although somewhat bitter sweet as the price has not cooperated very much lately@#>*! We should also be excited because of the plethora of varieties we have to choose from for seeding this fall. I mention this because it is plot touring season and there is a lot to learn from observing plots. The trick is matching what you see to your individual situation ….profitably. If you opt to seed early, you have great choices. If you opt to seed a bit later, likewise you have very good choices.

It is interesting to me to observe the number of new varieties being offered. Considering the development cost of a new public variety (or private variety) is roughly $1M plus, per copy, you can begin to understand the competitive nature of the breeding business. My problem is the landscape is getting crowded very quickly. There are a lot of very well adapted varieties from which to choose. How do you distinguish between them? How does your seedsman distinguish between them? I sometimes jokingly tell growers my wife has given me the names of three divorce attorneys I can chose from if I build one more grain bin! Actually, I think she is only half kidding--- Our point here is this… the decision is bigger than varietal selection and we hope you are smart enough to realize the bigger picture. There is of course an income decision to consider. Also a weed control decision, a rotational consideration, a weather decision, landlord considerations, labor, taxes, insurance and the list goes on. There is also a grain quality consideration. There is a reason why our Pac Rim and SE Asian customers bid our wheat at a $45/ metric ton premium each year. It is because we produce wheat with flour having very high functional properties in their mills and bakeries. If you choosing between two relatively equal varieties agronomically, please consider the one with higher end use quality as your first choice. Your customers will appreciate it!

Decision Time

There are a lot of issues to consider when making this decision but one of the most important should be how do I generate the most income, not necessarily bushels, on my farm. I am suggesting you consider a more holistic approach to the issue. There is absolutely no reason I can think of to have cheat grass in your wheat. We have the tools now to make it a non-issue. One solution is grass herbicide, either Clearfield wheat and Beyond, or something like Osprey. We saw phenomenal results on cheat using 3-4 ounces of Beyond with MSO this year. That is virtually 100% control of cheat for less than $10.00 per acre. We have had really stellar results with both. The other more salient option may be planting a variety that matures early, like Arrowhead, Puma or Clearstone. This allows you the option of mechanical control of cheat grass and seeding a little later while still optimizing yield potential. Controlling grassy weeds is vastly underestimated in our less than 12” rainfall zone. The traditional approach is planting early and letting competitive exclusion of the early wheat work for you by out competing cheat grass. The associated risk with this strategy is possibly not having adequate moisture to finish the crop next June. I could go into a lot of detail but the point is controlling your worst problems efficiently this year, may save you headaches and money in the future. Address the issues on each field individually, and for Pete’s sake plant more than one variety just to manage your risk.

At the Lind Field Day last Thursday June 16th, one of the REEACH speakers told us that we are currently experiencing a shift in our weather patterns. You can call it what you want but his data pointed to the fact that in the transition zones (< 12” precip) we are going to have earlier dormancy break in the spring and more growing degree days each year along with warmer summers. So what does this mean? It means it is time to change our planting strategy, and adapt to what Mother Nature is doing. We don’t have to be on the losing end all the time – we can use her to our advantage also. It requires working from the neck up.

Just because dad always seeded every acre at the same time with the same variety doesn't mean we have to the same. Why would you seed a variety that fills early in the lowest places on the farm where it is most susceptible to frost? How many times have you thought the big flats and draws had the most potential and they actually yielded the least? Variety selection can also help you mitigate this risk. Some varieties have an early filling characteristic and others fill quite a bit later. I mention this only so you consider all the options at your disposal when selecting a variety. So…either attend the field days….or take your seed guys to lunch.

CRP Take Out

The feds delayed the decision on accepting new and renewal CRP acres nationally this spring. The decision was not well received on several fronts. First the conservation priority areas that were once deemed somewhat equal in the country balancing wind and water, were changed to reflect someone else's opinion of what constitutes a priority area. The late announcement also created an issue for many growers wanting to re-enroll. It came too late to plan for a spring crop and the cheat grass all went to seed so now the growers must decide whether to try to plant a winter crop this fall with limited moisture or wait until 2017 to plant. Regardless of which option you choose, the cheat grass will be a big problem, as will the lack of moisture. The option is double summerfallow; not so good! No revenue for a year is a hard pill to swallow. The one saving grace is we now have the tools to address late seeding and grassy weeds.

Growth Regulators

Last month I mentioned we had a poor experience with one product. After talking to the research community at WSU, the issue of adding naturally occurring growth hormones at elevated rates specifically gibberellic acid is very problematic, in our opinion. What has evidently not been evaluated or documented by the manufacturer is what effect the growth hormones have on different semi-dwarfing genes, and combinations of those genes. Also there is an issue with soil temperature and the plants response to this chemistry under very warm days and cooler nights. Consequently we are having a change of attitude regarding what we recommend. We have used a competitive product in the past with very good results. It is manufactured locally and contains the same growth regulator but at a much lower rate. It also contains a very good balance of micro nutrients and phosphorus. We will be using this root developer product because it also has proven to have a very positive effect on coleoptile length at emergence also. The product is Seed Vigor and the cost is about $0.015 pennies per pound of seed, for a 40 pound seeding rate that is $.60/acre. If it helps your wheat come up one day faster, and you avoid a crusting rain, well you can do the math!! My brother and I use Seed Vigor on every acre we plant, regardless of spring or fall seeding. The corn growers in the basin do this all the time. They use a planter band with all the micros and nutrients they can shove at the seed because it makes a big difference at harvest. The difference is we, speaking of the dryland community here; don't have the option of using a planter band in many cases. We have been noticing a very substantial increase in the use of MAP (11-52-0-0 phos) blended with the seed directly in the seed row, but the inclusion of a true planter band in not practical with conventional planting equipment limitations. The take home message here is if you going to spend $120 per acre getting the crop to harvest, why wouldn't you spend $0.60/acre giving the plant the best start possible?

MAP-- Monoammonium Phosphate ($NH_4H_2PO_4$)

This seemed like a good segway to MAP. We introduced this service several years ago and our system of blending dry MAP with the seed into the truck is really catching on. Those growers that consistently use MAP are commenting on its effectiveness. Benefits are increased root development and therefore better winter hardiness and nutrient availability due to the expanded root mass. Also, because P_20_5 is relatively immobile in the soil, placement with the seed is a good idea. It takes substantially less MAP concentrated in the seed row to get the same nutrients into the plant than a broadcast application which needs incorporation. MAP is water soluble and dissolves rapidly in adequately moist soil. Upon dissolution, the two basic components of the fertilizer separate again to release ammonium (NH_4) and phosphate (H_2PO_4), both of which plants rely on for healthy sustained growth. The pH of the

solution is moderately acidic, making MAP an especially desirable fertilizer in neutral and high pH soils. Studies have shown that placing MAP in close proximity to the seedling causes no risk of phytotoxic damage from NH_3.

Hey – every bushel of wheat you produce removes ½ lb. of Phos (actually .48#'s) from the soil --- it has to be replaced sooner or later right? 20 pounds of MAP costs about $7.00 per acre. That gives you 2.2 #'s of N and 10.4 #'s of P_20_5 right is the sweet spot. Give it a free ride and put it with your seed when you pick it up!

Irrigated Wheat

Increasing Protein in Wheat – I know it's too late for this year but I keep getting questions regarding this topic. If you want more protein in your wheat you need to make sure your crop has enough nitrogen late in the season. If you raise red wheat and find yourself with low protein grain at harvest time and you are using a fertilizer field man – *fire him immediately*! There is absolutely no excuse to have your wheat discounted for low protein with the technology we have today. The answer is simple, use the MORE ON method. You know the crop needs Nitrogen so put MORE ON! Petiole testing is simple to do and cost effective. Since plants haven't figured out how to lie yet, they will always tell you how much nitrogen they have available for both yield and protein. Be religious about your Nitrogen monitoring. Don't pull a petiole within 8 days of your last fertigation; otherwise you tend to get a false reading. It takes the plant about 7 days to metabolize N after a major application. Remember a plant always uses nitrogen for yield before protein so on a year with a big yield; the plant may exhibit lower protein, unless you are clever enough to know about that ahead of time!!!!!!!! That is why petiole sampling is so important. There are well established minimum critical levels. If your nitrogen percentage is less than 4%, and your Sulphur is less than .35%, you will have low protein. The plant is telling you FEED ME! There are too critical times to do this test. First at flag leaf emergence (fekes scale 10.1) and the second at anthesis or bloom (fekes scale 10.5). Snap 100 flag leaves at flag emergence and test them. At this time you still have a chance to adjust through the water by fertigation, since the plant is still translocating most of its nutritional needs through the roots. The second critical time to do a petiole is at anthesis. This is when the plant is changing physiologically from vegetative stage to reproductive stage and at this point we must address additional N needs through the flag leaves very simply because the plant is relying on the flag leaf for 85% of the nutrition for filling the head. We can manipulate the protein percentage artificially by forcing more Nitrogen into the head by loading the flag with liquid urea so the bulk of the nitrogen gets fixed in the head as protein. The take away message is this --- if you have low protein this year --- you probably have more wheat in the field than you fertilized for. It typically takes 2.8 lbs. of N per bushel of yield for red wheat. Next time be a little more optimistic about your yield, a bit of extra N in the soil late in the crop year won't leave town quickly.

Bullet Points –

- We have **non-detect alfalfa** seed for this fall. Trifecta 2 is a fall dormancy 2. PGI 557 is a fall dormancy 5. Forage Complete 6010 is a fall dormancy 6. All are proven winners for your individual production areas.
- **Caliente 199** mustard has proven itself to be a magnificent tool as a green manure plow down material for the control of Verticillium wilt, suppression of nematodes, fusarium, silver scurf, and other pathogenic fungi. The results are well documented, shorter rotations are possible, higher gravities, and better water infiltration and higher organic matter content has been routinely documented.
- If you intend to plant wheat this fall and want to double crop behind it, we have the ticket. **Esperia or Rebelde HRW** have the maturity to allow you to harvest in the first week of July and have plenty of time for that second crop, whether it is buckwheat or alfalfa, or even sweet corn. Short very stiff straw, won't lodge, very efficient user of N, which means higher protein and very good functional quality. Domestic millers love this stuff.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

- Cool season cereals require cool weather to optimize growth. Warm season grasses need warm weather to grow. This time of the season, plant **Sorghum Sudan** to optimize your forage needs. What we mean by optimize is most bang for your money. Really – the guys that try this product always request it the following year. Call me and I will give you a list of customers to call.
- **Teff grass** is a very efficient grass and the return on investment is really good. Roughly $10 per acre for two cuttings of 2 ½ tons each. Frost takes it out completely. Easy, cost effective.
- Market you grain through **Tri Cities Grain in Pasco** – 545-0900 for Damon Filan or Jay Atchison. They have very best market intel in the business and are ready to accommodate your harvest needs. Ask Mark Weber to send you their email or text prices two times each day. They turn trucks faster than anyone in the area and they pay faster than Obama can say gun control.

Craig and I are serious about providing you with the most current and accurate information we can. Michael Dixon is really ramping up his product knowledge. This year is a tough year for us also. Selling products when the market is depressed is no fun. Just remember when we make a commitment to you we keep it, when we make a mistake we fix it, when we promise you something we deliver. No one has better product knowledge! No one has better service! And no other seed business works harder for your profitability than Tri State Seed Co. You have our word on that. Thanks for your business and have a safe harvest.

Dana Herron - Michael Dixon - Craig Teel - Margaret Krug - Nathan Robbert - Andres Garcia - Jorge Ortiz

Call us at 509-234-2500 or call me 24 hours a day at 509-546-1300.