



Beef Quality Assurance takes center stage with national award
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Animal transporters lead the way with TQA certification
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There's never been a better time to enroll acres in CREP.
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Take cover!
Learn how cover crops can protect soil in extreme weather — and protect bottom line in poor markets
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'Why are my cattle itchy and rubbing on everything?' pg 24

Cover crops are proving to be 'no brainer,' especially for livestock producers,
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March 1, 2018, ISSUE

The 2018 Spring Ag Mag is a production of the Rock County Star Herald and featured advertisers.

Beef cattle producers take pride in their responsibility to provide proper care to cattle.

The Code of Cattle Care below lists general recommendations for care and handling of cattle:

- Provide necessary food, water and care to protect the health and well-being of animals.
- Provide disease prevention practices to protect herd health, including access to veterinary medical care.
- Provide facilities that allow safe, humane, and efficient movement and/or restraint of cattle.
- Provide personnel with training/experience to properly handle and care for cattle.
- Make timely observations of cattle to ensure basic needs are being met.
- Minimize stress when transporting cattle.
- Keep updated on advancements and changes in the industry to make decisions based upon sound production practices and consideration for animal well-being.
- Persons who willfully mistreat animals will not be tolerated.

Minnesota Beef Council: It's all about consumer confidence

The BQA program is a cooperative effort between beef producers, veterinarians, nutritionists, extension staff, and other professionals from veterinary medical associations and allied industries.

The program asks everyone involved with beef production to follow the FDA/USDA/EPA guidelines for product use and to use common sense, reasonable management skills and accepted scientific knowledge to help prevent product defects at the consumer level.

Remember, the consumer signs the paycheck, they purchase what they trust and their trust and confidence is the basis of our industry's future, and our children's future.

As a food producer, your livelihood depends on securing the trust of your consumers. Food safety plays a major role in the buying decisions of health-conscious Americans all across the country.

Fortunately for beef producers, the public generally perceives beef as a safe and wholesome product. However, there is no such thing as “too” safe when it comes to the food consumers buy for themselves – and their children. After all, the beef you produce is a product that somebody will put in his or her mouth.

Add to that reality the ever-increasing competition for the consumer’s protein dollar, and you quickly see how crucial it is for beef producers, of all sizes in every segment, to commit to a management strategy that inspires consumer confidence in the safety of beef products.

In addition to safety, factors affecting cattle quality – and food quality – are also important.

At the consumer level, quality attributes such as tenderness, flavor and portion size are important. At the production level, we are concerned with things like performance, health and predictability all through the system.

In both cases, these quality factors can be affected by management decisions throughout the production chain – including management decisions at the cow-calf and stocker levels.

Furthermore, consumers have become more environmentally conscious. They are more closely scrutinizing agricultural practices that affect air and water quality and animal well-being. Although these factors may or may not directly affect the safety and quality of beef, they impact public perceptions of the beef industry, which may alter consumer acceptance of beef products.

Beef Quality Assurance is a proven system of sensible management practices that will help further strengthen consumer confidence in beef products. Adopting BQA principles is a proactive way to implement a philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) into a beef operation and address quality and safety issues.

BQA can also help a producer become more competitive. Active participation in this program is beneficial as the world’s image of beef originating from the United States is enhanced.

Helping to ensure food safety and quality from the producer to the consumer requires everyone involved with beef production to follow regulatory guidelines for product use and to utilize BQA Best Management Practices.

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It takes a village: Beef quality involves

“At the end of the day it’s about doing the right thing.”

— Jay Bakken, Blac-X Farms, BQA certified beef producer

By Lori Sorenson
Rural Beaver Creek cattle producers with Blac-X Farms received national recognition from their peers this year for quality beef production. Jay and Suzie Bakken and Peter and Carrie Bakken traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, to accept the National Feed Yard Beef Quality Assurance award at the 2018 National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Convention. The award an “outstanding” operation that demonstrates “animal care and handling principles as a part of its day-to-day operations.”

‘At the end of the day, it’s about doing the right thing’
The Bakkens said they’re honored by the recognition, but they said the award is a broader reflection of the beef industry’s efforts to ensure quality. “It’s about our consumers and making sure we have a standard set of animal handling



Lori Sorenson photo/0208 bakken beef award
Peter (left) and Jay Bakken are filmed in October for a video about their operation that was recognized in February by the National Cattlemen’s Association for Beef Quality Assurance,

practices to assure quality and safe beef for the consumer,” Jay said. “Consumers today — especially millennials — want to know where their food comes from, which is why farmers markets and ‘grow local’ are

so popular. This gives us an opportunity to show that we’re real people doing real work to produce real food to go on their plates.” He said the national recognition is a privilege and responsibility. “It’s up to us to tell the

story about what beef producers in Rock County and everywhere are doing,” Jay said. “At the end of the day it’s about doing the right the thing.”

Getting the message right
Telling the story is part of the reason the Bakkens were nominated for the national award. “BLAC-X Farms Inc. is not afraid to open their doors to the public. They host on-farm tours for community members, schools and industry professionals,” said Minnesota Beef Council Director Karen Schaefer. “They are also willing to collaboratively work with researchers to demonstrate that BQA best management practices do have a return on investments and add value to their operation.” She also pointed out that the Bakkens participate in the Discovery Farms Program in Minnesota where they opened





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producers, veterinarians, nutritionists ...



Beef Quality Assurance image

Thanks to thorough record-keeping, Peter and Jay Bakken learned that cattle fared better in their open feedlot design than if they'd been sheltered. Due to good feedlot management, they kept the impact of poor weather days to a minimum and were able to capitlize on good weather resulting in healthier cattle overall.

their farm to on-site research looking at water quality. Data collected over the course of seven years is utilized to determine best management strategies for managing water run-off, manure and the environment. “The Bakkens continually participate in the SD Adopt a Farmer program, where farmers and ranchers have built special relationships with students across the state and shared information about agriculture through their Adopt-A-Farmer program,” Schaefer said. “The program produced

several videos, including daily operations on the Bakken farm, such as vaccinating cattle procedures, manure management and animal care.”

‘Protocol developed by cattlemen for cattlemen’
Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) is a nationally coordinated, state implemented program that provides guidelines and certification for raising cattle under optimum management and environmental conditions.


Beef Quality Assurance/see 26



“We want to assure our consumers that we’re doing a good job in providing them a safe, wholesome product.”

— *Dr. Erin deKoning, Rock Veterinary Clinic, trainer for BQA certification*

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Farm safety check: Livestock facilities and handling safety

Stressed livestock are more likely to injure themselves, their handlers, and are more difficult to work with.

Stockmanship training for workers handling livestock can be key to preventing injuries.

There may also be changes producers can make in buildings, gates, and working areas that will minimize distractions and startling objects.

Producers are encouraged to check their buildings and equipment to keep themselves and their animals safe.

The list below offers a few things to check to ensure safe animal handling:

- Do all workers receive appropriate stockmanship training to handle livestock?
- Are the working lanes toward chutes curved?
- Are livestock able to follow other animals ahead of them when being worked or moved?
- Is lighting uniform to prevent large shadows in barns and working areas?
- Are you minimizing strange sights, like random coats, coffee mugs, or tools, when working cattle?
- Do loading ramps and chutes have solid sidewalls to prevent distractions?
- Is the floor uniform with enough traction? Cattle will balk at changes in color, texture, or depth.
- Are your alleys adequate? Cattle move uphill easier than down, as long as the slope of the ramps is no more than 20 degrees.



Mavis Fodness photo/0222 Ag Tab TQA
Kelly Leuthold pushes market steers to the front of the semitrailer Feb. 15 near Steen.

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Raising the standard

Hills livestock hauler certified in transport quality assurance

By Mavis Fodness

Hills livestock hauler Kelly Leuthold considers himself an animal activist.

“PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) is always pushing for better treatment,” he said. “Producers who do the quality assurance program show groups they are treating animals humanely.”

Leuthold joins the humane treatment of livestock through leading by example.

He first completed training on safe animal transport in 1996 while working for pork producer Christensen Farms.

Leuthold continued the safe procedures years later when he started his own business, Leuthold & Sons, near Hills.

“Every day we find out bad things that happen in the livestock industry,” he said. “We need to promote the good.”

Among Leuthold & Sons’ five semitrailers they transport hogs, cattle and sheep almost a half million miles annually.

Understanding animal behavior and applying humane handling techniques builds trust between him and the producers he serves.

“You are handling the



Mavis Fodness photo/0222 Ag Tab TQA

Kelly Leuthold, owner of Leuthold & Sons out of Hills, is certified to haul hogs under the National Pork Board’s Transportation Quality Assurance standards. The same humane standards are also applied to the transport of cattle and sheep even though these livestock industries don’t mandate such certification. That may soon change, however, as the beef industry considers a move in that direction.

Leuthold TQA/see page 10



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CIH Magnum 310, '15, 758
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TRACTOR- TRACKS

CIH Steiger 420 Quad RowTrac, '14, 835 hrs, lux cab, full guidance, Hi Flow, PTO, 3 Pt., 18" tracks - includes 48/1200 additional Powertrain warranty (424117) \$249,900.00
CIH Steiger 450 Quad RowTrac, '14, 775 hrs, lux cab, susp cab, 10 HIDs, side HIDs, full guidance, 3pt, PTO, high flow, 5 remotes, drive wheel scrapers, 120" spacers, 18" Camso tracks, tow cable, includes 48/1200 additional Powertrain warranty (B090907) \$268,500.00
CIH STX 450 Quadrac, '05, 4330 hrs, new transmission w/ warranty, new 30" Soucy HD tracks, Full Autoguidance, very nice \$145,000.00
CIH 470 QuadTrac RowTrac, '14, 1269 hrs, luxury performance cab, 7 HIDs + side HIDs, full guidance, twin flow w/ 6 remotes, power beyond, PTO, diff lock, drive wheel scrapers, 24" tracks w/ wide undercarriage, front bumper weight, radar, dual beacons, cold weather start pkg. in excellent condition (ZF300845) \$269,500.00
CIH Steiger 620 Quad, '15, 1245 hrs, lux perf cab, 4 HIDs, HID side lights, full guidance, high flow, 6 remotes, power beyond, 1000 PTO, diff lock, NEW 30" tracks, PT warranty (A352217) \$307,900.00
CIH 620 Quad, '15, 1520 hrs, lux perf cab, 10HIDs + side HIDs, full guidance, twin flow w/ 6 remotes, power beyond, PTO, diff lock, drive wheel scrapers, 36" tracks, PT warranty (ZF303204) \$315,000.00

TRACTOR- 4WD

IH 6588, 7500 Hrs, TA & Clutch OK; Injection pump done; 18.4X38 bias ply Tires, rear loaders with 9 bolt hubs \$16,200.00
CIH 9230 5894 hrs., 95, 18.4x38 duals, 3 pt. PTO, PS, Row Crop Special (JEEB033860) \$57,500.00
CIH 9370, '96, 3835 hrs, 520/85R42 Firestone radial duals (approx 70%), 12 spd manual, bareback (JEEH0037116), farmer owned, in EXCELLENT condition \$54,900.00
Case IH Steiger 350, '13, guidance ready, 546 hrs, pto, lux cab, 520/85R46 (ZDF134937) \$199,500.00
CaseIH Steiger 350 HD, '14, 1024 hrs, lux cab, susp cab, elec mirrors, 10 HIDs + side HIDs, full guidance, high flow, 4 remotes, 1000 PTO, diff lock, 480/85R50s \$189,500.00
CIH Steiger 370 HD, '17, 275 hrs, lux performance cab, performance lighting, LED side worklight pkg, single beacon light, full guidance, cold weather pkg, std drawbar, high flow w/ 4 remotes, power beyond, 1000 PTO, diff lock, 480/80R50 Firestone duals, radar (ZGF311208) \$234,900.00
CIH Steiger 370 HD, '17, approx 400 hrs, lux performance cab, performance lighting, LED side worklight pkg, single beacon light, full guidance, cold weather pkg, std drawbar, high flow w/ 4 remotes, power beyond, 1000 PTO, diff lock, 480/80R50 Firestone duals, radar (ZGF311214) \$234,900.00
CIH STX325, '05, 2075 hrs, 520/85R42 Firestones, 24spd man trans, 4 hyd, deluxe cab, bareback (JEEI106223) \$95,000.00
CIH STX375, '01, 5,954 Hours, PS, HD-Diff Locks, Ballast Pkg, 4 Hyd -High Hyd 55GPM, 520X46, bareback, Excellent Shape (JEEB097575) \$72,500.00
CIH Steiger 580 HD, '17, approx 400 hrs, luxury performance cab, performance lighting pkg, side LED lights, single beacon, full guidance, 6 remotes, diff lock, Firestone 800/70R38s, radar, 1 owner local trade farmer owned, like new! (ZGF311100) \$329,500.00

TRACTOR- MFD

Agoe DT200A, '08, 2100 hrs, CVT, westendorf FM 750 loader and grapple, duals, ft fenders, (5268010) \$89,500.00
CIH Farmall 102A, '13, 6 hrs, MFD, cab, air susp seat, 40kph trans, 16 x 8 power shuttle, 2 remotes, 98" bar axle, 18.4 x 38s, front fenders, loader ready, wheel weights, warranty \$64,500.00
NEW CIH Farmall 120U, '18, MFD, cab, suspended high vis cab, performance monitor with ISO, premium air seat, 3 rear remotes, 2 midmount valves with joystick, 540/1000 PTO, HD MFD axle w/ diff lock, 460/85R34 rear singles, HD rear flange axle, front & rear fenders, loader ready, 4 LED lights, 6 rear wheel weights, HD brake discs, 200 amp alternator - CALL FOR SPECIAL RATES call for pricing
CIH Magnum 7140 MFD, '93, 18.4x42 rear duals, Front Fenders, 4sp rev, 18 ft wghts, 5790 hrs (JAA0046893) \$49,500.00
CIH Magnum 8930, MFD, '98, 20.8 x 42, 16.9 x 30, 4 sp reverse, 7720 hrs, (JJA0089972) \$49,500.00
CIH Magnum 225 CVT, '13, 1060 hrs, Fit Susp, Cab, 360 HID , lux cab, rear duals, ft fenders, 540/1000 pto, guidance ready, 50k, (ZDRH05024) \$139,500.00
CIH Magnum 225 CVT '14, 1034 hours, lux cab, full guidance, hi flo hyd, 4 remotes, ft fenders, sus cab, 10 suitcase weights, 2 rear weights, 480/80r46 rear duals, 380/85s34 front (710879) - includes 48/1200 hours additional Powertrain warranty \$147,900.00

CIH Magnum 235, '13, 1361 hrs, lux cab, susp cab, HIDs, hi flow, 4 hyd, 1000 PTO, afs ready, 480/80R50 rear duals, ft singles (ZCRD07283) \$99,500.00
CIH Magnum 235, '14, 540/1000 PTO, dlx cab, guidance ready , high flow , 480/80/ R46 rear duals, 830 hrs (ZERD01123) \$125,500.00
CIH Magnum 250, '15, 1200 hrs, 480/80R50s, ft singles, high flow, 4 hyd, std MFD (749117) - includes 60/1500 hours additional Powertrain warranty \$145,000.00
CIH Magnum 260, '12, 1780 hrs deluxe cab, dual beacon, 18 ft wghts, 5 remotes, 1000 PTO, guid ready, 380/90/54 rear duals, 380/80/R38 ft singles, (ZBRD08681) \$129,500.00

CIH Magnum 260 '12, 1128 Hours, Susp Frt, Luxury, Susp Cab, 540/1000, HD Drawbar, 380/85R34 Frt Duals, 480/80R46, 4 HYD, Pro 700, NavII (ZBRD08365) cenex oil warranty till Jan 21 2021 \$135,000.00
CIH Magnum 260 '13, 1230 Hours, Luxury Susp Cab, 540/1000, High Flow Drawbar, 380/80R38 Frt Duals, 380/90R54, 4 hyd, Pro700, NavII, (ZCRD05871) cenex oil warranty till 8-20-2022 \$135,000.00

CIH Magnum 290, '14, 695 hrs, 480/80R46 rear duals, 380/80R34 frt duals, standard MFD, hi flo, 4 hyd, 360 HID pkg, full guidance, 540/1000, front fenders, weights, includes 48/1200 additional Powertrain warranty, (B381017) \$139,900.00
CIH Magnum 260, '13, 1461 hrs, 480/80R46 rear duals, 380/85R34 frt duals, lux cab, susp cab, 360 HIDs, leather seats, full guidance, HD drawbar, hi flo w/ 4 remotes, power beyond, 540/1000, std MFD, front fenders, front & rear weights (C105887) (ZDRD02990) - includes 36900 additional Powertrain warranty \$138,900.00

CIH Magnum 280, '15, 670 hrs, 480/80R50 rear duals, 420/85R34 frt duals, lux perf cab, full guidance, std hyd pump, 4 hyd, 1000 PTO, susp MFD, weights, includes 60/1500 additional Powertrain warranty (624117) \$169,900.00
CIH Magnum 290, '13, 950 hrs, 480/80R50 rear duals, 380/38 front duals, luxury cab, susp cab, front HID light, fenders, front & rear weights, high flow with 4 remotes, 540/1000 PTO, HD drawbar(zcxd8826) (1-BAK-290) \$134,900.00
CIH Magnum 290, '13, 1225 hrs, 480/80R50 rear duals, 380/80R38 frt duals, lux cab, susp cab, HIDs, 540/1000, full guidance, high flow, 4 hyd, susp MFD, front fenders, includes 36900 additional Powertrain warranty (B832217) \$149,500.00
CIH Magnum 290, '13, 905 hrs, 480/80R50 Michelin, 380/80R38 frt duals, lux cab, susp cab, HIDs, 1000 PTO, weights, high flow, 5 hyd, full guidance, susp MFD, front fenders, nice clean tractor! - includes 36900 additional Powertrain warranty (147017) \$144,900.00

CIH Magnum 290, 13, 955 hrs, 480/80R50 Lux Cab, susp. cab, frt duals, full guidance, 5 remotes, 3 PTO's, 50K - includes 36900 additional Powertrain warranty (664117) (ZDRD06780) \$152,500.00
CIH Magnum 290, '12, 940 hrs, 380/80R38 Frt Duals, 480/80R50 Rear Duals, PS, 4 Hyd, HD MFD, 1000 PTO, afs ready, (ZCRRD07083) \$139,500.00
CIH Magnum 310, '17 450hrs. Lux Cab , Suspended cab and ft axle 540/1000 pto, 5 rear outlets, 50K trans, (ZGRF05022) \$208,000.00
CIH Magnum 310, '15, 758 hrs, 23spd PS, lux perf cab, full guidance, HD drawbar,

hi flow w/ 5 remotes, power beyond, 1000 PTO, susp MFD, 480/80R50 rear duals, 420/85R34 front duals, front & rear weights - includes 60/1500 additional Powertrain warranty (C709157)(ZERF08349) \$182,500.00
CIH Magnum 310, '15, 929 hrs, 23spd PS, lux perf cab, full guidance, HD drawbar, hi flow w/ 5 remotes, power beyond, 1000 PTO, susp MFD, 480/80R50 rear duals, 420/85R34 front singles, front & rear weights - includes 60/1500 additional Powertrain warranty (C469117)(ZERF08443) \$194,000.00
CIH Magnum 315, '14, 1200 hrs, luxury cab, elec mirrors, front & rear HIDs, single beacon, luxury positive response seat, full guidance, severe duty fuel filter, block heater, 19 spd powershift, radar, HD drawbar, high flow w/ 4 remotes, 1000 PTO, Firestone 480/80R50 rear duals, 380/80R38 front duals, front fenders, 10 front weights, 2000# rear weights, AM/FM/Bluetooth (ZERD01518) \$149,500.00
CIH Magnum 315, '13, 1600 hrs, dlx cab, MFD, front & rear duals, susp cab, front & rear weights, HD drawbar (1-JBC-JAYCOX) \$139,500.00
CIH Magnum 315, '14, 740 hrs, lux cab, susp cab, HIDs, full guidance, hi flo, 5 hyd, 1000 PTO, weights, 480/80R50 rear duals, 420/85R34 front duals, susp MFD, includes 48/1200 additional Powertrain warranty (B486987) \$169,500.00
CIH Magnum 315, '14, 1950 hrs, dlx cab, susp cab, F & R duals (all new Firestones), weights, 1000 PTO, hi flo, afs ready, 4 hyd(3 available) \$139,500.00
CIH Magnum 315, '14, 1950 hrs, dlx cab, susp cab, F & R duals (all new Firestones), weights, 1000 PTO, hi flo, with guidance, 4 hyd (3 available) \$149,500.00
CIH Magnum 340, '13, 1635 hrs, lux cab, susp cab, high flow w/ 5 remotes, HD MFD, hyd trailer brakes, 1000 PTO, full guidance, severe duty fuel filter, electric mirrors, radar, block heater, front & rear HIDs, 19 spd powershift, AM/FM/Bluetooth, 480/80R50 rear duals, 380/80R38 front duals, HD drawbar, front & rear weights, 1 owner local tractor in excellent shape (ZDRD02391) \$164,900.00
CIH Magnum 340, '15, 625 hrs, dlx cab, susp MFD, full guidance, 1000 PTO, 5 hyd, 480/80R50 rear duals, 380/80R38 frt duals (Titan), front & rear weights - includes 60/1500 additional powertrain warranty(949897) \$189,500.00
CIH Magnum 370 CVT, '14, 1300 hrs, lux susp cab, full guid, high flow, std MFD, 1000 PTO, 480/80R50s, frt duals, weights - includes 48/1200 hours additional Powertrain warranty (967117) \$185,000.00
CIH Magnum 380 CVT, '15, 900 hrs, lux cab, 5 hyd, 480/80R50s, front duals, full guidance, weights - Includes 60/1500 additional Powertrain warranty (945217) \$212,500.00

CaseIH 105U , 2011 Dual speed PTO, Electric Hi/Lo transmission, L 750 loader ft fenders, 843hrs, 460/85/30 rear tires \$49,500.00
CIH Maxxum 125 Multicoilertruck, '14, MFD, 274 hours, suspended deluxe cab, rotary beacons, grid heater, cold weather pkg, HD battery, fuel tank guard, 540/1000 PTO, 460/85 rear singles (ZERB03419) \$74,900.00
CIH Maxxum 125, '13, mfd, 1373 hrs, 16x16, 540/1000, 3 remotes, , 460/85R38s, beacons, power beyond (ZDBB03407) \$67,500.00
CIH MX285, '05, MFD, 633 hrs, front end, 480/80R46, 380/85R34 front duals, All firestone rubber 75%, deluxe cab, high flow, 4 remotes, heavy duty drawbar, ez guide 500/ez steer (JAZ138799) \$64,500.00

NEW CIH Puma 185 CVT, '17, susp cab, deluxe fabric comfort pack, high vis roof, bluetooth radio, 8 LED worklights, beacon, high mount roadlight, 200 amp alternator, block/trans heater, independent swing HD drawbar, high flow w/ 4 remotes, power beyond, 520/85R42 rear singles, 420/85 front singles (all Michelin rubber), 112" bar axle, front fenders, rear fenders, loader ready, HD brake discs - CALL FOR SPECIAL RATES call for pricing
NEW CIH Puma 185 PS, '17, MFD, susp cab, active leather comfort pack, high vis roof, 14 LED worklights, 2 beacons, 200 amp alternator, high flow w/ 4 remotes, power beyond, 460/85R42 rear singles, 420/85R28 front singles, (all Firestone rubber) 112" bar axle, front fenders, wide rear fenders, loader ready, extended life brakes, rear weights - CALL FOR SPECIAL RATES call for pricing
CIH Puma 185, '12, 1550 hrs, MFD, susp cab, 540/1000 PTO, 380/90R46 rear duals, 380/85R30 singles, extremely light pkg, heated front & rear window, 200 amp alternator, high capacity hyd pump, 112" bar axle, rear HID worklights, power beyond, rear wheel weights, CIH L750 loader with bucket, very clean tractor \$99,500.00
John Deere 7930 IVT, '09, 1536 hrs, MFWD w/ ILS, Autotrac, 48 Command Cab, Active seat, 380/90R54 rear duals, 380/80R38 fronts, rock box, fenders \$118,900.00

Kubota BX2360, '11, 180 hrs, 23hp diesel, mfd, loader, R4 tires, 3 point, mid pto \$110,995.00
Kubota BX2360, '13, 120 hrs, 23hp diesel, mfd, loader, R4 tires, 3 point, mid pto \$110,995.00
Kubota B2601, '16, 5 hrs, 26hp diesel, mfd, loader, R4 tires, 3pt, PTO \$18,500.00
New Holland T6050 Elite, '08, 4168 hrs, 16 Spd Power Command, 540/1000, 2 hydr remotes, 18.4x38, 14.9x28, Miller GP30 loader w/ 8" HD bucket, joystick \$53,900.00
New Holland T4050 '10, 3663 Hours, 16/16 Power Shuttle, 540/1000, Loader w/80"Bucket&Spear&Forks, Cab H&A, 280/85R24 420/85R30 (Z9JA00678) \$34,500.00

TRACTOR- 2WD

Ferguson TO-20, '49, 11.2-28 rears 95%, 3pt, pto (TO-8683) with 3pt sprayer \$2,500.00
Case IH JX 65, 2 wd, 725 hrs, Bulter Loader, \$18,500.00
International 300 with loader and bucket, new tires \$3,500.00
SKID STEERS, TELEHANDLERS, EXCAVATORS, BACKHOES
Boxer 526DX walk behind skid steer, trencher, bucket, 585 hrs, bucket 2007, (2421) \$16,500.00
Bobcat MT 52 Walk Behind Skid Steer, 36" Bucket, 1014 hrs 2009 (A3WR12543) \$17,950.00
Bobcat 543B 2300hrs. '84 (511111598) \$9,900.00
Bobcat S-185, '04, Std Controls, , cab, heat, 1770 hrs (525017595) \$18,500.00
Bobcat S250, '08, ACS Controls, 2 spd, 7018 hrs, power bobtach, cab w/ heat, radio, (530918677) \$16,900.00

Bobcat S250, '10, 905 hrs, H51 pkg, ACS controls, 2 spd, Kubota diesel, power Bobtach, cab w/ heat, good rubber - in excellent condition!! \$29,500.00
Bobcat S570, '14, 2230 hrs, A71, power bobtach, Cab/AC, 2 spd, blk heater, ACS, Air Ride Seat, New Tires (ALM411239) \$28,500.00
Bobcat S590, '14, A51, Std Controls, Cab/AC, 2 spd, blk heater, power Bobtach, radio, 3500 Hours, Tires 70% (AR9R11346) \$27,900.00
Bobcat S590, '14, A71, ACS, 2-Speed, Power Tach, Radio, Air Ride Seat, 1150 Hours, (AR9R11263) \$33,500.00

Bobcat S650, '16, 1299 hours, ACS controls, H51 pkg, 2 speed, power Bobtach, cab w/ heat (ALJ818433), remaining warranty \$34,900.00
Bobcat S650, '15, 2884 hrs, H51, ACS controls, 2 spd, power Bobtach, cab w/ heat, 33 x 12-16.5 tires, engine & driveline warranty to 3000 hours or June 2018 (ALJ814665) \$27,900.00
Bobcat S650, '10, 775 hrs, A51, 2 speed, power Bobtach, cab w/ AC, SJC controls, ride control, radio, Kubota engine (A3NV12316) \$36,900.00
Bobcat S650, '12, A71 pkg, 342 hrs, Selectable Joystick control, 2 spd, 33x15.5-16.5 flotation tires, radio, air ride seat, power bobtach, like new, Kubota engine (A3NV162) \$37,900.00

Bobcat S750, '13, 1681 hrs, A71 pkg, ACS controls, cab w/ heat & A/C, deluxe panel, sound reduction, 2 spd, block heater, air ride seat, radio, IT4 Kubota engine, nice machine (ATDZ12108) \$32,500.00
Bobcat S750, '14, 1608hrs, A71 pkg, std controls, cab w/ heat & AC, deluxe panel, sound reduction, 2 spd, block heater, IT4 Kubota engine (ATDZ13407) \$32,500.00
Bobcat S850, '11, A71pkg, 2000 hrs, std controls, 2 spd, radio, air ride control

\$39,950.00
Bobcat T450, '16, cab/heat/ac, A-81 pkg., 123 hrs, bobtach, keyless (AUVP12707) \$39,950.00
Bobcat T 590, '15, H51, Radio, 1005 hrs (ALJU14660) \$36,500.00
Bobcat T250, 06, std controls, 2925 hrs, new reman bobcat engine, radio, heat/ac, bobtach, newer tracks (531811163) \$28,500.00
Bobcat T650, '16, 955 hrs, A71 pkg, deluxe cab, sound reduction, std controls, 2 speed, radio, 12" tracks (ALJG16790) \$42,500.00
Bobcat T870, '14, 825 hrs, IT4, A91 pkg, SJC controls, air ride seat, power bobtach, deluxe panel, sound reduction, radio, 2 speed, attachment control \$62,500.00
Case 410, '05, 989 hrs, new 10-16.5 tires, ROPS w/ poly sides, aux hyd, very well maintained and in excellent condition! \$18,900.00
Case 435, '09, cab w/ heat, with bucket (N8M482706) \$22,500.00
Case 465, '05, 2022 hrs, cab w/ heat & A/C, mechanical Case hand controls, power quicktach, HD tires, bucket included, 88hp, 3000# ROC, nice machine \$27,500.00
CASE SV250, '12, 1600 Hours, AC/Heat, Manual-Tach, E-H Controls, 2-Speed Perform Pkg, Radio (JAFSV250TCM460699) \$29,000.00
Case SV300, '14, 2105 hrs, cab, air heat, perform pkg, 2 spd, radio, NEW tires, new door (NEM470200) \$34,500.00
Case TR270, '14, 425 hrs, cab/heat/ac, radio, 2 sp, quick tach, new tracks (NEM482396) \$45,000.00
Cat 257B, '13, track loader, 2 speed, cab, ac, 72" bucket, 925 hrs \$36,500.00
JCB 260 eco, (2196596) 2014, 2000 hr, ISO control, cab w/AC, reverse fan, hyd quick tach, tires 90%, 2600# lift, 74hp, \$34,500.00
Kubota SSV65HC, '16, 2390 hrs, 2 speed, cab, ac, hydraulic quicktach \$26,500.00
Kubota SVL95-2SHFC, '16, 18" tracks, Cab, Hyd Q/A, High Flow, Radio, 480 Hours (SN 32252) \$59,500.00
Case 580SN, '11, 1450 hrs, Cab/heat/ac, extendahoe, 4wd, pilot controls, ride control, stab pads (705777) \$69,500.00
Case 580 SM, '07, 4218 hrs, extendahoe, 4wd, pilot controls, cab/heat/ac, 92" loader bucket, 24" bkt, 12" bkt, ride control \$44,000.00
Doosan DL200TC-3 payloadator, 200 hrs, hydra load isolation system, JRB style quick coupler, 2.5yd GP bucket, 60" pallet forks, like new \$129,500.00

DISK

CIH 496 Disk, Cushion Gang, '89, 3 bar, 33", disk blades measure 19.75 (JAG0156373) \$13,500.00
CIH RMX340, 34", '10, cush, 3 bar, 9" spacing, 21.5" blades (JFH0044104) \$39,500.00
CIH RMX340, 34", '11, cush, 3 bar, 9" spacing, (JFH0049350) \$35,000.00
CASEIH RMX 340, 25", '10, 3-Bar harrow , 8 bolt main hubs and truck tires (JFH0044000) \$26,250.00
CASEIH RMX 340, 25", '05, 20.5-21" Blades, 3-Bar harrow (JFH0025252) \$23,500.00
CIH RMX 340 True tandem, 28", '10, 3 bar harrow, hyd leveling, cushion gang, single point depth, blades sharpened this Fall (JFH0045558) \$25,000.00
CIH RMX 370, 34", '10, cush, 3 bar, 9" spacing (JFH0046528) \$40,000.00
CIH RMX 370, 34", '11, cush, 3 bar, 9" spacing (JFH0051779) \$38,900.00
CIH true tandem 330 34", new blades, rolling basket \$32,500.00
CIH 345 True Tandem, 25ft, rolling basket, NEW AGED, two to choose from LN1226 and LN1227 \$43,000.00
CIH 345 True Tandem, 28ft, rolling basket, NEW AGED, LN1157 \$47,500.00
Great Plains, ID206A, SHORT DISC, 26ft, rolling basket harrow, NEW AGED, LN1351 \$59,400.00
Great Plains '14 Turbo Max 3500 (GP-C1686H) \$55,000.00
Great Plains , '07 Turbo Till, 40", rolling basket (2682 NN) \$32,500.00
John Deere 637 Disk, '09, 452" width, 9" spacing, 5 section folding, pivoting caster wheels, in great shape \$54,500.00
Krause 7400, 45", '06, 9" spacing, self levling hitch, lights, no welds or cracks, double fold, new scrapers \$45,000.00
Sunflower 1434-26, '06, cush, 20" blades (20060121) \$29,500.00

FIELD CULTIVATORS & FINISHERS

CIH 4300, 38", new 9" shovels, 3-bar adjustable harrow with all new teeth (JAG0623000) \$6,000.00
CIH 4900 35", 3-bar adjustable harrow \$6,950.00
CIH 4900, 36.5", 3-bar adjustable harrow \$3,950.00
CIH TM1L 34.5", 4-Bar, '04, 7.3" Maxxi Point, Pivoting Stabilizer Wheels, Always Shedded (S/N JFH0035730) \$29,000.00
CIH TM 200 40", '12, ACS basket, Power \$49,500.00
CIH TM 200 50.5", '12, ACS basket, pivoting stabilizer wheels (YBD057005) \$54,500.00
CIH TM 200 50.5", '08, 4-bar (JFH0035623) \$29,900.00
CIH TM 200 50.5", '14, 4-bar, pivoting stabilizer wheels, always shedded \$44,500.00
CIH TM 200 50.5", '14, ACS basket, pivoting stabilizer wheels, 7.3" maxxi-point sweeps, double fold, in excellent condition (YDD069801) \$59,500.00
CIH TM 200 50.5", '15, ACS basket, pivoting stabilizer wheels, 7.3" maxxi-point sweeps, double fold, in excellent condition (YED078490) \$62,500.00
Hesston 2224, 24" field cultivator, 3 bar adjustable mulcher \$1,250.00
John Deere 800, 44", 3 bar harrow, newer sweeps, double fold, stabilizer wheels, single point depth control \$9,750.00
John Deere 980, '00 40", 4 bar (013199) SOLD
DMI Tigermate, 36", Blue, (523545) \$10,500.00

ROLLERS & CRUMBLERS

CIH 110 - 50" ACS rolling basket, in great shape \$11,500.00
Degelman 45" field roller, '08 \$19,500.00
DMI hitch to pull a crumbler, factory built, with hyd hoses, currently mounted on a DMI tigermate \$600.00
Shop Built Crumbler Hitch, black with hyd lines, was on a dmi 730 \$700.00

PLANTERS

Kinze 2500 Twin Line 8/30, '96, Corn/Soybean disks, Finger pickup metering system, One season use on disk openers, Trash whippers, Planter Monitor (900857) \$34,000.00
CIH 900 12RN, semi mount, early riser monitor \$4,500.00
CIH 1200 16RN, '04, Pivot, sunco TW, universal display, (CBJ0018325) \$42,000.00
CIH 1200 16RN, '08, shut offs, (CBJ036088) \$49,950.00
CIH 1200 1223, '04, New Pro 600, sunco trashwhippers, New pump, 500 acres on openers (CBJ022098) \$45,000.00
CIH 1200 16RN, '08, Bulk Fill, 20/20 Monitor with row sensors, New seed discs in 2017(350 acres each), RMs, shut offs, great shape \$42,500.00
CIH 1200PT 12RN, '06, bulk seed, Yetter shank tool, good condition, no dis- play (CBJ025008) \$34,500.00
CIH 1250, 16RN, '09, bulk, liquid fertilizer, insecticide, updated mini-hoppers, spring DP, Yetter floating pin adjust TW, Pro600 monitor \$39,900.00

LIQUID APPLICATOR/FERTILIZER SPREADER/STRIP-TILL

FAST 8118 '14, 1800 Gallon Tank, 40'/60" Split, Raven Monitor, 5 Sections Shut-Offs, (8118-5167-0414) \$42,500.00
Lofness RC800 Fertilizer spreader - row crop type, 8 ton, hydraulic drive variable rate ready, hyd spinner, 80-120" spacing - NEW \$21,900.00
Unverferth NutriMax 60" Liquid Fertilizer Applicator, 30" spacing, 23 coultter, 20" ripple blade, Ace pump, ISO, 380/90R46 duals, inductor tank - NEW WITH WARRANTY \$59,500.00
Unverferth NutriMax 2600 Gallon Tank, 60" Liquid Fertilizer Applicator, 30" spacings, 23 coulters, 20" wavy coultter blades, ACE pump, ISO, 380/90x54, Inductor Tank, - NEW WITH WARRANTY \$59,500.00

Kruase Gladiator 1200-1630, '13, 6-Ton Montag, Rock Pts, Spring Reset, Scale, No monitor, 24.5" Coulters, (1647) \$75,000.00

SPRAYERS



Coming Soon

New Twin Homes

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Cleveringa Construction, Inc. has a development agreement with the city of Luverne to build four twin home structures (eight units) on Roundwind Road. The twin homes will be two or three bedroom units with double garages.



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Left to right: Landon Gacke, Cory Schoeneman, Bob Krull, Dave Sandbulte, Adam Uithoven, Jeff Van Santen, Derek Sandbulte, Lowell Schelhaas, Karlin Van Otterloo, Merlin Cleveringa

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–The Cleveringa Construction Team



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Livestock handling facilities, such as these at Glen and Matt Boeve's feedlot east of Hills, makes loading on semitrailers easier and safer for both cattle and people. Driver Chris Zylstra is pictured at right. **Below**, Glen Boeve moves a small group of market steers into the loading area.

Mavis Fodness photos/0222 Ag Tab TQA



Transportation Quality Assurance/ continued from page 7

rancher's living for the year," he said.

The pork industry developed the transportation quality assurance or TQA standards. Every three years haulers like Leuthold pass a test to show that they know the correct loading and unloading procedures developed by the National Pork Board.

Without proof of TQA certification, a driver cannot unload

hogs at a packing plant.

"It's common sense stuff about the pigs' welfare," Leuthold said.

By following a few welfare rules, the pork industry has reduced swine deaths and improved the livestock's body condition when arriving at the packing plant.

While only the pork industry requires TQA certification, Leuthold thinks those standards should be applied to the handling of sheep and beef as well.

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Mavis Fodness photo/0222 Ag Tab TQA
Zach Kounkel moves a trailer divider out of position during a recent trip to Steen. Transporter Kelly Leuthold said limiting the number of livestock in each compartment keeps the animals calmer and are less likely to become injured before reaching their final destination.

"You are handling the rancher's living for the year."

— Kelly Leuthold, livestock trucker, Hills

Rubber mats at the bottom of the loading chute prevent slippage as the market steers walk up the incline to the semitrailer.



"It's good for the industry," he said.

Some of those practices include limiting the number of animals loaded in a single trailer to the safe use of handling aids.

Since Leuthold transports livestock 52 weeks a year, he also exercises caution during extremely hot or cold days.

On hot days water misters can cool the animals in the trailer. On cold days, shields can be placed over the trailer openings to block the wind.

Keeping the livestock's welfare in mind decreases the level of stress placed on the animals, Leuthold said.

Excited livestock breathe heavier, and the increased sweating could significantly shrink the animals' bodyweight by several hundred pounds before the load reaches its final destination.

"Shrinkage is a big factor," Leuthold said.

The lower the bodyweight, the less money earned for the producer.

Bruising is another factor that's limited with proper loading and driving techniques.

Leuthold said when loaded with livestock he plans the route to limit making sudden stops or starts that could lead to bruising or injuring of the cattle.

The rough handling and ride could affect the meat quality for consumers.

Leuthold said when slaughtered animals are under too much stress, their dressed meat appears darker in color. The darker meat could be deemed unusable by the meat packer because the color is not what the consumer expects.

"A consumer likes a nice red steak on the plate," he said. "Not dark red."



Mavis Fodness photo/0222 Ag Tab TQA
A market steer peers out the side of the semitrailer.

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“Around mid-May when everything is tilled and there’s not enough to hold the soil, everything can go. ... I hope in the long run we see farmers looking at different options to keep that soil covered and keep biological activity going in the soil as long as we can.”

— Doug Bos, Rock County Land Management Office



Lush green vegetation crops up between corn stubble on the Aukes farming operation near Hills.

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Take cover

Cover crops offer protection in poor economy and poor climate

By Lori Sorenson

In an ag economy of shrinking profit margins, producers are turning to cover crops as a way to get more mileage out of their soil while protecting resources.

“I think farmers are going to be forced to really look at what changes they can make in their operations to make them more profitable,” said Doug Bos, assistant director of the Rock County Land Management Office.

“Talking with bankers and some farmers, these coming years could be a rerun of the 1980s farm crisis. ... There will definitely be fallout from these low prices and high costs, especially if they continue for the predicted two years.”

He said cover crops may be one tool or piece to the puzzle to make a difference.

“The reason we promote cover crops is for soil health, erosion control and ultimately water quality,” Bos said. “But for a farmer struggling financially, they may not see these as adequate reasons to risk change.”

Bos said it’s a hard sell to invest in seeding cover crops into a corn and soybean rotation. “But the very reasons we promote it for are the reasons that cover crops can make a farm more profitable,” Bos said.

There have been two local workshops on cover crops in Rock County, and Bos said the idea is slowly taking hold.

“There are those who are doing it and those who are standing back wondering if they should do it,” Bos said.

“What scares people is that it’s a whole different way of managing their operations,” he said. “It’s not the simple ‘plant your corn, spray it and walk away.’”

Take cover in extreme weather

Another message Bos is repeating is the role cover crops play in soil health and preservation.



Heavy rains pounded newly planted fields in 2015, cutting gullies through rows and carrying untold tons of topsoil with water runoff. Now there are increased efforts underway to maintain a vegetative cover on vulnerable soil to prevent this type of erosion and improve soil health.

“It will help buffer against weather extremes — drought patterns and wet patterns —

and also extreme weather events that contribute to soil erosion,” Bos said.

Weather data shows that extreme weather events are more frequent and more severe

“Call it what you want — if you don’t believe in global warming, it’s about climate change, and our farmers are going to have to make some adaptations to protect themselves and their soil.”

— Doug Bos,
Rock County Land Management Office

than in recent years. Climatologists refer to an extreme rain event as more than 6 inches of rain in 24 hours in a specific area. If this much rain hits black dirt in the spring, the damage can be devastating with truckloads of topsoil and new plants washing away through deep gullies cut through fields. In the past 15 years there were eight recorded “extreme” events, during which pounding rain caused localized flooding and damage, especially on row-

Cover crops/see page 14

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Cover crops/

from page 13

crop fields with exposed soil. This compares to 15 extreme events in the previous 120 years between 1880 and 2000.

"This gives you an idea of how many of these rainfall events we can expect and their increased frequency," Bos said.

"Call it what you want — if you don't believe in global warming, it's about climate change, and our farmers are going to have to make some adaptations to protect themselves and their soil."

He said farmers are going to have to adapt their land use practices in order to protect their topsoil.

"Cover crops are a hedge against these extreme events," Bos said.

"Around mid-May when everything is tilled and there's not enough to hold the soil, everything can go."

"... I hope in the long run we see farmers looking at different options to keep that soil covered and keep biological activity going in the soil as long as we can."

He said the return on cover crop investment improves the longer the practices are in place.

"We want to create a better soil environment to allow moisture-holding capacity that drains more efficiently and prevents compaction," Bos said.

"They may not produce more, but it will make them more resilient to climate change."



Tons of topsoil washes from a field into a ditch during a 2015 extreme rain event in Rock County.

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Image courtesy: Beef It's What's for Dinner

For livestock producers, cover crops are 'no brainer'

By Lori Sorenson

Brad Petersen for many years rotated corn and soybeans on his farmable acres near Hardwick.

Now he rotates oats in the planting schedule on 30 acres, which are also seeded with cover crops and used for grazing, manure and other income.

For Petersen, cover crops are a no-brainer. "To be honest, I like the benefit I have just in cattle feed and the extra crop in the rotation," he said. "Plus it's good for the soil."

He plants his oats in the spring, using an old end-gate seeder that once belonged to his grandpa, Merten Petersen.

His wife, Heather, and children Megan, Mandie and Ty have all taken their turns

riding in the wagon to fill the seed hopper. "Or I get my dad (Eugene) to drive and I ride in back," Petersen said.

In mid-July the oats comes off those 30 acres, manure is spread, and cover crops — a mixture of turnips, radishes and sorghum-Sudan grass — are seeded (with the same end-gate seeder).

The field develops a lush green cover of nutrient-rich vegetation by late August, which is about the time Petersen's pastures start getting thin.

So he turns out his cattle on the cover crop until they can graze on corn and stubble in the fall.

This, he said, is where he sees the biggest gain from cover crops.

"Last year I grazed 78 pairs (156 animals) on 30 acres



Brad Petersen



Brad Petersen's cattle graze on paddock on his farm near Hardwick. Incorporating cover crops into his farming operation, he said, has been a "no-brainer" in terms of its benefits for both cattle and soil. At left is a sample of soil on the Terry Aukes Farm that has benefited from cover crop roots.



"Last year I grazed 78 pairs (156 animals) on 30 acres for 31 days. If I had to dry-lot feed them with silage or hay, it would have cost \$6,000. That's why I started doing it; it wasn't until I started putting a pencil to paper that I could see it in dollars and cents."

— Brad Petersen, Hardwick

for 31 days. If I had to dry-lot feed them with silage or hay, it would have cost \$6,000," Petersen said.

"That's why I started doing it; it wasn't until I started putting a pencil to paper that I could see it in dollars and cents."

In addition to the feed savings, Petersen said the 30 acres brings in other revenue.

Last summer his oats yielded 167 bushels per acre at \$2.30 per bushel.

Three round straw bales were sold locally for \$30 per bale.

All things considered, Petersen figures he brings in \$700 per acre on his 30 acres of oats.

Input costs are roughly \$150 per acre on that ground.

This includes oat planting at \$75 per acre for seed, chemicals and fertilizer; cover crop seed at \$25 per acre; plus fuel and labor for planting and harvest.

Compare this profit margin to corn at the current cash grain price of \$3 per bushel, and Petersen said dedicating acres for cover crop isn't a tough decision.

"It's cheap to grow and I have really good yields," he said. "And I have a place to go with my manure and I can graze my cattle on it. ... To me it's really a win-win situation."

He said he's not surprised more local producers are converting acres for cover crops, especially those with livestock.

In fact, some are buying some livestock, just because cover crops improve livestock returns on investment.

"If I could figure out a way to do more, I would," he said. "I'm considering taking some acres out just for grazing. With

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For non-livestock producers, proof is in the soil

“Root mass builds organic matter, and using aggressive tillage long term degrades organic matter. Growing something green over time starts to transform the soil by increasing soil microbial activity.”

— Terry Aukes, Hills



Terry Aukes (far right) farms with his dad, Orlie, and brothers Dan (back left) and Brian on fields that fall on the border of Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa. They started with 60 acres of cover crops, and Terry said they noticed soil health improvement by the second or third year. Today 75 percent of the Aukes fields are rotated with cover crops, and they're planning to do more. (Submitted photo)

\$3 corn vs. what calves are worth, you could (just about make it work).”

When people ask him if they should try cover crops, Petersen doesn’t hesitate to encourage them.

“Don’t be afraid to try it,” he said. “If you start small, you can still see the benefits.”

‘I wish we’d started sooner’

Terry Aukes, Hills, said he finds himself telling people the same thing.

“Don’t let fear of the unknown keep you from trying it,” he said. “We’ve been using cover crops for eight or nine years, and I only wish we’d started sooner.”

Aukes farms with his dad, Orlie, and brothers Brian and Dan on fields that fall on the border of Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa.

They started with 60 acres of cover crops, and Terry said they noticed soil health improvement by the second or third year.

“There was decreased erosion, and the soil health and texture started to improve,” Aukes said.

“Root mass builds organic matter, and using aggressive tillage long term degrades organic matter. Growing something green over time starts to transform the soil by increasing soil microbial activity.”

Today 75 percent of the Aukes fields are rotated with cover crops. “We’d like to go 100 percent,” he said. “Last fall got dry, so we chose fields accordingly.”

He said the cover crop fields have noticeably better soil profiles than those that don’t get planted green between corn and soybean rotations.

“Another noticeable difference that we didn’t know was going to happen is that organic matter is building,” he said. “This holds water and keeps nutrients in the soil longer, rather than leaving through a tile or erosion.”

Livestock farmers have a more obvious financial incentive to incorporate cover crops in their fields, but Aukes, who

doesn’t have livestock, said he’s seen advantages purely from the soil health perspective.

For example, he said less aggressive tillage saves money in labor, fuel and equipment,

and more soil nutrients translates to a savings in commercial fertilizer.

It’s more difficult to measure other benefits, but Aukes said cover crops have improved corn and soybean yields. “The

fields where we’ve been using them have been comparable or better,” he said. “They’ve been very good.”

Aukes and Pedersen and other local cover crop farmers have helped with local work-

shops to share information about how cover crops work.

Doug Bos at the Rock County Land Management Office in Luverne has information about how to get started. The number is 507-283-8862.

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Grain marketing trends

Now is a great time of the year to locate your breakeven and get sales working at reasonable levels.

By Mike Minor
Professional Ag Marketing Inc.

The grain industry today

After months of limited news coming out of the grain complex, we have a few interesting developments to discuss.

Since the beginning of the post-ethanol expansion era, we have been preaching that the next leg of the grain cycle will be increased world demand from ethanol, feed, and a slowing world production increase. In other words, increasing demand at a faster pace than supply. This essentially forces the supply and demand lines closer together for both the world and eventually the United States.

We believe that evidence in last week's WASDE report supports that. We expect the transition out of corn acres to other crops will continue going forward.

Heating up the soy market

The soy market has been nothing less than exciting in the month of February. Friday's settlement in March soybeans was its highest since July 28 last summer.

The fuel behind the fire in the soy complex comes from the decaying Argentina production estimates from the ongoing drought. The Argentina conditions continue to

The environment we currently live in provides us with very limited opportunities. If a sale at today's levels makes money, it makes sense in today's row crop production atmosphere.

worsen with not much favor in sight. Time is an issue as their harvest rapidly approaches.

Brazil however, continues their slow-paced harvest in hopes for just enough dryness to seed corn in. Brazil's large soybean crop has the potential to satisfy their large export month of March. Although, with their wet conditions problems like rust have developed. Quality concerns may have an impact on Brazil's exports going forward, this being after China tightened up quality restrictions on United States exports. This has potential to benefit United States exports this spring, especially when placed beside our currently low U.S. dollar.

When it comes to South America's weather rally, be prepared for a selloff. Historically, a large percentage of weather rallies tend to be short-lived. If Argentina's conditions show any signs of improvement, it won't take long for the soybean market to fall back to a lower trading range.

Corn steps up, but is it enough?

Corn finds itself in a similar situation to soybeans. Corn prices have slowly clawed their way back to harvest levels after hopping on the back of the soy market.

With large ending stocks, the corn market will experience heavy resistance on rallies from farmer selling. Try not to get too caught up in the emotion of a rally and make sales that make sense for your business. When comparing our current market situation to last year's, it's easy to find similarities. We are trading at nearly identical trading levels to last year.

The environment we currently live in provides us with very limited opportunities. If a sale at today's levels makes money, it makes sense in today's row crop production atmosphere.

Now is a great time of the year to locate your breakeven and get sales working at reasonable levels.

As the market rallies from weather concerns, it is important to make futures sales and reward the move higher.


The separation of basis and futures remains important going forward. With this market rally, basis has already widened out. Look for the spring timeframe to lock in basis on soybeans and take advantage of the two-prong marketing approach.


In the midst of a challenging margin structure over the last few years, the market has provided limited opportunities. Please contact Professional Ag Marketing to discuss strategies that make sense for your specific operation.

This data is provided for information purposes only and is not intended to be used for specific trading strategies without consulting Professional Ag Marketing Inc. Trading commodity futures and options involves substantial risk of loss and may not be suitable for everyone.

Mike Minor, Professional Ag Marketing Inc. at 507-449-2030 (cell: 605-480-4171) or mikem@professionalagmarketing.com

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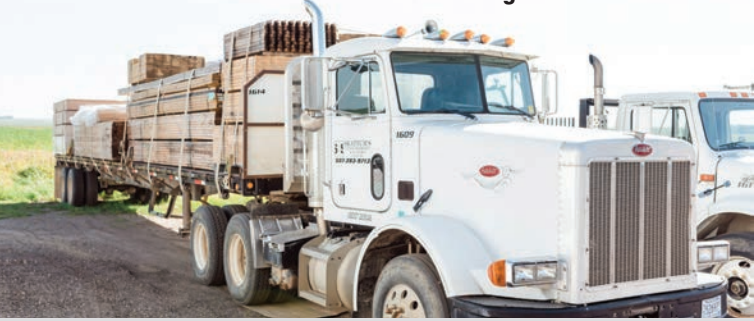




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Minnesota West Community & Technical College offers Articulations for Agriculture

Minnesota West Community and Technical College, in conjunction with Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) in Marshall, has recently approved new articulation agreements between the institutions in agriculture.

Paul Lanoue, Minnesota West Dean of Agriculture & Business said it will be win-win for all involved.

"We are very excited to have an additional opportunity for our students at Minnesota West to further their education at SMSU.

"This agreement will allow students who have a desire to further their education more options in selecting a school that best fits their

individual needs and career aspirations," Lanoue said.

"Students will receive a strong foundation of knowledge at our school and can expand upon their experiences at another program that is quickly growing in their reputation of developing future leaders in our field.

"Agriculturally related careers are in high demand locally and we are eager to be a solution to bridging the employment gap in our communities."

The articulations are specific to Minnesota West degree of Agriculture Business A.S. (60 credits) will articulate to SMSU for a track for the Agriculture, B.A.S. (60 credits) or Agribusiness Management B.S.

The articulation will facilitate credit

transfer and provide a transition from one related program to another seamlessly, according to Jeff Rogers, Minnesota West Ag Instructor.

"Minnesota West is excited to offer our agriculture students the opportunity for seamless transition from MN West to Southwest Minnesota State University in pursuit of advanced agricultural degrees," Rogers said.

Minnesota West Community & Technical College offers numerous agriculture degrees including Agriculture, Ag Business/Management & Marketing, Plant Science (GIS/GPS), Ag Production & Management. For more information contact 800-658-2330 or www.mnwest.edu

"Agriculturally related careers are in high demand locally and we are eager to be a solution to bridging the employment gap in our communities."

— Paul Lanoue,
Minnesota West
Dean of Agriculture
& Business

NFO Holds Animals From Market

The following article appeared in the February 15, 1968, edition of the Rock County Star Herald.

Rock County NFO members are now withholding livestock from market, according to Lester Baustian, county NFO president. The 35-state grain market boycott by the National Farmers Organization which was begun a month ago, was extended to meat animals on Monday of this week.

Organization members have been urged to hold cattle, hogs and sheep from the market until prices reach the goal set by NFO national headquarters. This means a price of \$32.00 per hundredweight for choice cattle; \$23 per hundredweight for light weight butcher hogs, and \$29.00 a hundredweight for top quality

fat lambs.

"Actually," explained Baustian, "we're as concerned about getting contracts from the packers as we are in getting these prices. We don't want to just get the price up there, and then have everybody start to sell at one time, so the market will go down again. What we are after is to get orderly selling so we have a stabilized market, and the only way we feel we can do this is through contracts with the packers."

How long it will take to achieve their goal remains to be seen, Baustian said. In 1964, the holding action on cattle lasted 43 days.

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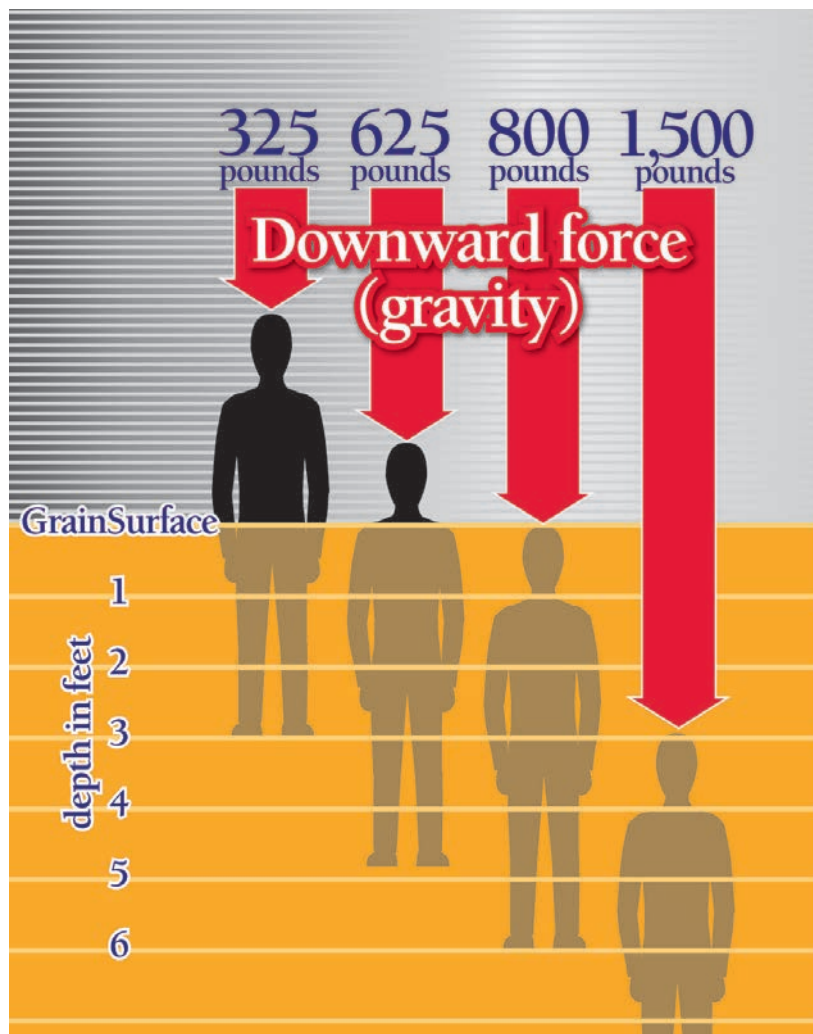
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Grain bin safety ... *The best rescue is one that never happens.*



It takes more than 325 pounds of force to extract a 165-pound person from grain in a corn bin. Photo credit: Charles V. Schwab, Iowa State University

Grain bin accidents remain a significant risk on farm operations nationwide, and producers are urged to educate themselves, their families and their employees about basic safety tips.

Entrapment — when individuals are unable to extricate themselves from grain or other agricultural materials — can occur in a silo, grain bin, grain transport vehicle, outdoor pile (avalanche) or bunker silo.

Engulfment occurs when individuals are fully buried in flowable agricultural material such as corn, small grains or feed.

Both engulfment and entrapment can also occur during the use of grain vacuum machines, with outdoor grain piles or in the event of a storage structure failure.

Within just 4 or 5 seconds, individuals can be submerged to the point where they are unable to free themselves.

"Within 15 seconds you can be buried in grain up to your waist and completely submerged within 30 seconds," said Dan Neenan, director of the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety.

Children are at greatest risk of entrapment and engulfment in grain transport vehicles, but adults have lost their lives in this kind of event, too.

One example OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) offers is when crusted grain stacked on one side of a wagon caused the wagon to become unbalanced and flip the tractor over onto the operator.

"Spring and fall are key times when grain engulfment events occur," Neenan said.

"The first question to ask before you enter the bin is whether or not you really need to go in."

*Dan Neenan, National Education
Center for Agricultural Safety*

"In June and July, farmers are often selling stored grain in anticipation of their fall harvest, and the potential for grain bin entrapment is high."

Neenan recommends that farmers and commercial elevator managers consult their local Extension office for training options.

Vocational ag teachers can also provide curriculums to help educate youth about grain handling safety procedures and the dangers of working around flowing grain.

Some tips offered by OSHA include:

- The best rescue is one that never happens.
- Never enter an emergency situation alone.
- Use confined space entry procedures or best practices available.
- Conduct a hazard assessment (as a preventive measure).
- Remember who is the most important — you.

"The first question to ask before you enter the bin is whether or not you really need to go in," Neenan said.

“If the answer is yes, review the safety rules to make sure you’re going in safely and you’re coming back out.”

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Reasons mulitply for putting cropland into CREP

Meet buffer requirements • Stop battling wet ground • Build a legacy.

By Ann Wessel
Minnesota Board of
Water and Soil Resources

The Van Wyhes near Hills were among the first Rock County landowners to sign up for the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Their enrolled land will meet buffer requirements, expand hunting opportunities and help to improve water quality.

Since enrollment opened nine months ago, meeting buffer requirements, creating a legacy or finding a solution for wet cropland motivated many of the first sign-ups.

MN CREP can be used to buffer streams, restore wetlands or protect drinking water supplies. It puts marginal cropland into perpetual conservation easements.

Nine months into the new MN CREP enrollment period, those motivations have sparked the most sign-ups throughout 54 eligible counties in the southern and western parts of the state.

"It's going to accomplish a lot as part of the conservation goals for Minnesota," said Dave Rickert, assistant easement section manager for the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

"These are areas that are playing an important part for water quality and wildlife habitat."

MN CREP can buffer streams, restore wetlands or protect drinking water supplies. It puts marginal cropland into perpetual conservation easements.

The federal-state partnership works like this:

Landowners enroll property for 15 years in the federally funded Conservation Reserve Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency.

That same land is enrolled in a state-funded, perpetual conservation easement through Reinvest in Minnesota, administered by BWSR.

MN CREP is funded with \$350 million from the federal government and \$150 million from the state.

By early February, 33 soil and water conservation districts had submitted 132 applications. The 115 funded involve 4,000 acres and \$34 million.

"I would attribute the success of that to local SWCD efforts as well as wanting to leave a legacy for future generations," Rickert said.

"These may be areas that are getting drowned out every so often. It's putting less stress on the landowner having to worry about constantly flooded areas."

Good for water, good for habitat, good for hunting

The Van Wyhes knew they needed to buffer the drainage ditch feeding Mud Creek. They could have seeded it to grass and fed the hay to Howard's cattle.

But they'd enjoyed the wildlife habitat that grew out of an existing 80-acre Reinvest in Minnesota easement along the Rock



Arlyn Gehrke (left), Rock County Land Management engineering technician, meets with Howard, Greg and Leroy Van Wyhe of Van Wyhe Farms, Hills. The Van Wyhes anticipate the land they enrolled in the Minnesota Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program will expand local opportunities.

MN CREP: Six things to consider

FAIR COMPENSATION: Combining USDA Conservation Reserve Program contract payments and Reinvest in Minnesota easement payments equals at least 90 percent of the land's value.

MARGINAL-CROPLAND FOCUS: CRP and RIM payments often are attractive on land that produces lower yields because of wet ground, soil type or other challenges.

CCRP COMPARISON: USDA does not plan to offer Continuous CRP to producers; MN CREP is the only option available. If CCRP becomes available at a later time due to additional incentives paid through MN CREP, payments will be 52 percent to 120 percent greater with MN CREP compared with CCRP.

FARM BILL UNCERTAINTY: MN CREP or other cropland retirement options might not be available in future legislation. The next federal Farm Bill will expire Sept. 30, the end of the federal fiscal year.

CONSERVATION ELEMENTS: Enrolling land in MN CREP directly benefits water quality and habitat.

LEGACY OPPORTUNITY: A MN CREP enrollment can benefit future generations and the environment.

a 1,500-acre corn and soybean operation based in Rock County near Hills.

"The ground is good, real good for farming and raising corn and beans. It's pretty valuable land down here," Leroy said. He advised farmers considering MN CREP to determine their soil type and payment rate.

"Fairly attractive rates for marginal crop ground may be driving some Rock County sign-ups," said engineering technician Arlyn Gehrke with the Rock County Land Management Office.

"We've had a surprisingly high interest in CREP. We're not known to have a lot of conservation easements in the county because we have a lot of fertile ground and expensive ground as well," said Gehrke, who works with the Rock County Soil and Water Conservation District.

"It takes a bit of risk out of the operation."

This spring, the Van Wyhes will seed their 12.75-acre MN CREP easement with the SWCD-recommended, six-grass mix.

"It'll be real good for habitat, and then at the same time it'll be helping the water quality, too, since it'll be acting as a buffer to keep the contaminants out of the ditch water," Leroy Van Wyhe said.

"I would hope that nitrate level would go down (and) if it is high in Mud Creek that we do see a change. That's what these buffer strips are for, to cleanse the water before it gets to the stream."

The Rock County Soil and Water Conservation District can be reached at 507-283-8862.

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Example: 160 acres corn / 200 bushel yield / 2017 MPCI spring price \$3.96 2017 MPCI fall price \$3.49.

Harvested Revenue = 200 bushel x \$3.49 fall price = \$698 farmer's harvested revenue.

Revenue Guarantee \$752 - \$698 farmers harvested revenue = shortfall \$54 per acre x 160 acres = \$8640 loss payment.

RAMP claims in 2017 were a result of cold wet spring, wind cutting off the

soybeans and farmers had to replant, hail, white mold in the soybeans, sudden death in soybeans and the largest portion of claims were due to decline in prices.

RAMP protects low yields and / or low prices.

With lower grain prices and smaller profit margins there is a very strong interest in RAMP for 2018 by farmers and lenders. In 2017 farmer-paid premium for RAMP in our agency was \$631,112.

In 2018 Farmers Mutual premium allotment to our agency which is the maximum amount of RAMP premium they will allow to be sold through our agency is \$1,131,112.

RAMP can pay losses above farmer's current MPCI coverage level up to 95 percent of yields. Payment is in addition to MPCI payment.

RAMP can cover crops on an optional unit basis even if you have enterprise MPCI coverage. RAMP can be structured to fit the needs of any producer.

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Use trees for solving ag and environmental problems

By Michael Walgrave

Placing the right plant in the right place is part of being a good steward of the land.

Land stewardship requires long-term thinking and paying attention to how the natural world works. Stewards of the land use farmer ingenuity to find the right technology for the right job. Stewards of the land use plants as technology: tree tech.

Today's steward of the land is part of an agriculture renaissance. Like every industry, agriculture is advancing because of computers, the Internet, and long-term data collection.

People are finding win-win-win solutions for people, planet and profit by effectively using a large range of tools and strategies.

For example, stewards of the land use trees to diversify and fortify a farm system.

Trees have been a forgotten tool for solving agriculture and environmental problems. A tree is like a Swiss Army Knife for land stewardship.

Properly placed trees can block the wind, keep the snow off the road, create habitat for animals and plants, provide a source of building material, clean the air, and produce food.

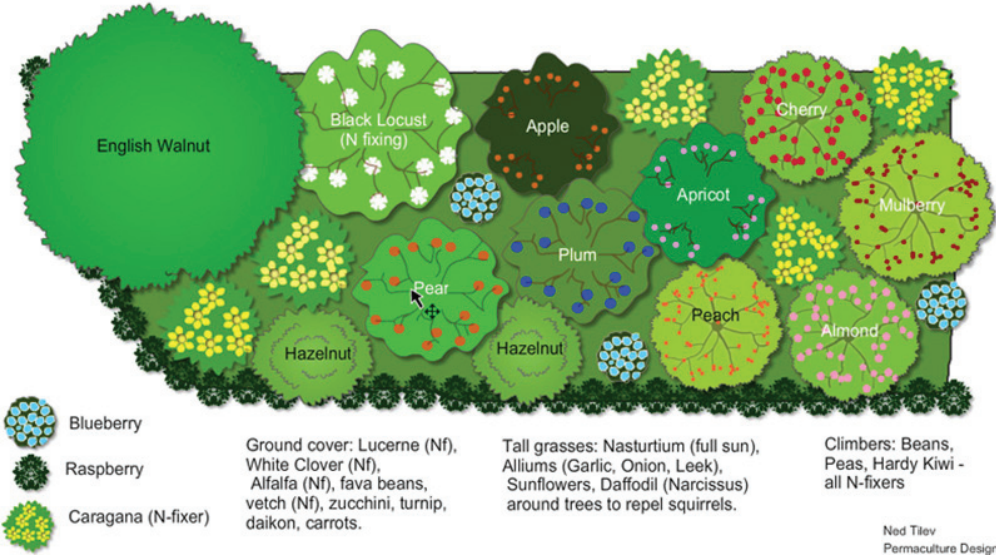
The list of solutions tree tech offers is long. Trees can protect plants and animals from the harsh wind and weather to improve animal gain and plant yields.

Farmers use trees to help block and filter manure smells. Tree tech can be used to house birds of prey to keep critters at



A tree is like a Swiss Army Knife for land stewardship. Properly placed trees can block the wind, keep the snow off the road, create habitat for animals and plants, provide a source of building material, clean the air, and produce food.

— Mike Walgrave, engineering technician, Rock County Land Management Office



Master Gardener Michael Walgrave is working with Luverne's Kim Rockman to plot out a food forest (like the one pictured here) and annual gardens on her land along Blue Mound Avenue. "What Kim is doing here is fantastic — taking a great piece of property for agri-tourism," Walgrave said. "It's a space for healing and preserving the land. It's good to see people with a vision and who are motivated."

bay. Tree tech can be used to increase the overall value of a farm; for example, one walnut tree can sell for \$5,000. Trees hold a plethora of answers for the community and the farm.

Tree tech requires planning and patience, however. Trees are not a quick fix. A steward of the land thinks in terms of

40-year "tree time." Perhaps a steward of the land may never see the trees they plant reach maturity, but that's not the point of land stewardship. Land stewardship is about leaving a productive environment and legacy for the next generation. Tree tech benefits many generations.

There are a few tree tech projects in Rock County this spring. One farmer is planting his 50-foot buffer for the deer. He is planting spruce trees for habitat and protection. He is also planting American plum fruit bushes to give the deer something to eat.

Another land owner is

creating a multi-functioning windbreak for a farmstead. He plans to plant fruit bushes such as elderberry, American cranberry bush and hazelnuts. His windbreak will include a row of evergreens to help block the wind and also be harvested for Christmas trees.

Two other rows of trees will be dedicated to walnut and red maple trees to potentially be harvested for nuts, timber and trees for landscaping.

The last example of applied tree tech is Kim Rockman's "Prairie Ally" on Blue Mound Avenue in Luverne. Prairie Ally is a food-forest plot and prairie restoration project that will be open to the public as an outdoor classroom. Prairie Ally will include a stream and buffer restoration project with the US Fish and Wildlife.

This outdoor classroom will give stewards of the land ideas on how to protect the water and soil while also producing marketable products in the buffer. Rockman is doing a lot for the community simply by creating a healthy environment other stewards of the land can learn from.

Stewards of the land interested in using tree tech to improve the land can seek out a local Master Gardener, visit the ag extension office, or call the Rock County Land Management Office.

Springtime is just around the corner. As they say in the industry, "The best time to plant a tree was years ago; the next best time to plant a tree is today."

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Cattle producers urged to control winter lice in animals

By Erin deKoning, DVM
Rock Veterinary Clinic

“My cattle are itchy and rubbing on everything!”
This is a common complaint that I hear this time of year, despite the animals being treated with topical or injectable lice preventative products.

Why the sudden increase in itchy cattle now? Why did the product that I used fail to work? Why do my cattle seem to be fine in the summer?

For the answer to these questions, we need to learn a little bit about cattle lice in order to understand how to control them well.

Lice are species specific, meaning that cattle cannot get lice from any other species. Cattle will only have cattle lice, horses will only have horse lice,



goats will only have goat lice, etc. Additionally, humans cannot get or give lice to animals.

Cattle have two different types of lice that cause them problems — biting lice and sucking lice. Causing intense irritation, biting lice feed on skin, blood, and scabs. Biting lice are typically found along the animal’s back, shoulders and neck. Also found along the neck and head, sucking lice feed on blood meals. Severe infestations of

In addition to treatment, a few management practices go a long way toward controlling lice. Cattle that are in good to excellent body condition are less susceptible to the side effects of lice infestations. As usual, good nutrition pays many rewards.

sucking lice can actually cause anemia in animals.

Lice can be found on cattle all year, but populations decrease in the summer due to shedding of long winter hair and elevated temperatures.

During cold weather, cattle crowd closer together, which allows for easy transmission between animals. Also, the combination of long winter hair with the colder temperatures creates an ideal environment

for lice reproduction.

The entire reproductive cycle is complete in just twenty to thirty days. Hatching in five to fourteen days, the female attaches her eggs to the cattle hair. The eggs go through a series of molts to become nymphs and eventually become adults that lay even more eggs, all in just fourteen days.

Many products are available to treat and control cattle lice. Talk with your favorite

veterinarian on which product would be a good fit for your particular operation.

Any treatment is only as good as its application, so be certain to follow label directions for dose per animal and frequency of application.

In addition to treatment, a few management practices go a long way toward controlling lice. Cattle that are in good to excellent body condition are less susceptible to the side effects of lice infestations. As usual, good nutrition pays many rewards.

When treating cattle with topical products, it is critical to treat every animal, no exceptions. If just one animal is missed, it can re-infect all other previously treated cattle and negate any previous treatments.

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Maximize crop coverage now to prepare for disaster later

By Barbara Anderson
Cattnach Insurance Agency
Multi-Peril Crop Insurance coverage has been providing a safety net to U.S. Farmers since 1980.

Prior to that time it was strictly a government program. While the basic structure of the program has remained largely intact, it has grown and evolved in many beneficial ways.

Producers now have the flexibility to protect their needs. It's no longer a cookie cutter or one-size-fits-all approach.

With all of the options available, it's more important than ever to have a trusted adviser.

You choose a lender based on their financial expertise and you purchase your seed and chemicals from someone who is an expert in their field.

Likewise, depend on an insurance professional to guide you through the complicated crop insurance program.

In an effort to maximize potential earnings, area producers are foregoing expensive top-heavy products and investing their premium dollars in plans that add the most revenue.

I hear loud and clear from farmers that they need to make every dollar work for them this year. Insurance coverage is more affordable if you carry a larger deductible, while increasing total coverage.



Revenue protection:
This plan of coverage has gone by several different titles including CRC (crop revenue coverage) and RA (Revenue Assurance). The plan that protects both revenue and production is now simply referred to as Revenue Protection.

This is the option the majority of producers prefer. You are able to exclude the Harvest Price for a reduction in premium. This option is rarely chosen due to the risk of "outgrowing" the loss. If the yield is high enough it can offset a production (yield) loss.

Unit structure:
Originally you could choose only optional or basic units. Enterprise units has become a very popular option in recent years. It comes with a significant reduction in premium, but also means more risk for the producer.

In an effort to maximize potential earnings, area producers are foregoing expensive top-heavy products and investing their premium dollars in plans that add the most revenue.
I hear loud and clear from farmers that they need to make every dollar work for them this year.

Hail insurance:
Hail insurance is not a new product, but there are many new ways to structure this coverage. Production Hail policies combine hail and yield protection into one policy that can be purchased along with a Multi-Peril Insurance policy.

Hail policies may contain additional coverage such as vandalism, fire and storage coverage. Hail insurance coverage can be a cost effective way to protect individual farms if you have elected enterprise units. You can purchase several hundred dollars of coverage for a very reasonable premium.

Named peril products:
Many companies offer additional products that you can pair with your Multi-Peril coverage. These may include increased replant coverage. The replant option may also include an, "early bird" clause that allows you to

plant prior to the initial planting period and still have some replant protection. You can also purchase policies that increase your payment due to revenue and yield losses.

There are many variations between products. This is where that trusted insurance professional can really be an asset. They can make sure you understand the options and help you make the best choice for your operation. These plans are a great way to get added protection. It is also important to understand the premium commitment that you are making.

Is the increased protection cost effective in your operation? Having the maximum Multi-Peril levels in place first is the most cost effective option due to the government subsidies available with these products.

The deadline for purchasing or changing Multi-peril spring crop coverage is March 15, 2018. It's important to start early and not wait until the last minute to make a decision. Protect your crop and your family's livelihood with the right coverage.



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Beef Quality Assurance takes a village of agriculture experts/continued from page 5

“It used to be everyone had a tie to the farm, at least through grandpa and grandma, but now we have consumers who are three generations removed and have no idea how food is produced.”

— Dan Leuthold, beef producer

“It’s a protocol developed by cattlemen for cattlemen,” Peter said. “It’s a common-sense approach to proper daily animal care.”

Cattlemen fund the program through their Beef Check-off dollars as a way to promote a positive public image and instill consumer confidence in the beef industry.

“It’s 100-percent consumer driven,” Peter Bakken said about BQA and about the award. “The goal is to have a quality product for the consumer.”

When producers implement the best management



Thorough recordkeeping on animal nutrition is an important part of the Beef Quality Assurance certification process.

fying their work.

“If customers want to be assured that is being done, then we’ll assure them,” he said.

“You have to keep adapting and changing. It used to be everyone had a tie to the farm, at least through grandpa and grandma, but now we have consumers who are three generations removed and have no idea how food is produced.”

Leuthold admitted there are other aspects of the BQA process that he looks forward to, such as the recordkeeping requirements.

“To go through this process will bring us up to speed on the latest and greatest methods of beef production,” he said.

Rock County leads the way in beef quality

Dr. Erin deKoning of the Rock Veterinary Clinic in Luverne offers training for local beef producers to get certified.

At her last session several weeks ago, 50 beef producers showed up for their BQA certification, many of them for their three-year renewal.

Considering Rock County’s size, she said that’s an impressive number.

BQA/ continued on next page

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practices of a BQA program — and acquire the certification — they assure their cattle are the best they can be.

The BQA stamp of approval will soon be required by beef harvest companies like Tyson, Cargill and JBS, Jay said.

“It won’t be long before all beef suppliers will be required to be BQA,” he said, adding that cattle transporters also have their own Trucking Quality Assurance standards for animal handling.

Deadlines loom for beef producers to be certified

Dan and Amy Leuthold have a 700-head feeder cattle operation in southeastern Rock County along with 100 stock cows.

They sell their cattle to Tyson, which recently announced all its suppliers will need to be BQA certified by January 2019.

Dan said they already meet most of the BQA requirements for herd management and animal care, but haven’t yet completed the training toward certification.

“I’ve looked at it online, I’ve been planning to do it, but haven’t signed up yet,” Dan said. “It takes time, and life gets in the way.”

Now he’s among dozens of local cattlemen who will stop procrastinating and start certi-

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Beef Quality Assurance takes a village of agriculture experts/continued from page 26

“I think it’s a case where if one producer does it, others follow suit, and we’ve had really good leadership among our cattle producers,” deKoning said.

She said it’s helped that many Rock County producers — such as Bakkens and many other local beef producers — took the lead early on to adapt BQA practices.

deKoning said these practices are not only the right way to raise cattle, but they’re soon going to be the only way to do business.

“By 2019, Tyson has said if you want to sell cattle with them, you have to be BQA certified,” she said. “They come and look at your farm, your processes, pen conditions and how you handle sick cattle and rendering.”

She said she’s proud of Rock County’s beef producers for operating ahead of the curve.

“It’s what we’re all going to have to do someday, so we’re staying ahead of it,” she said.

And ultimately, that’s good news for consumers.

“We want to assure our consumers that we’re doing a good job in providing them a safe, wholesome product,” deKoning said.

She said the four veterinarians and 15 staff members of Rock Veterinary Clinic are all BQA certified.

Also, two veterinarians are trainers for Pork Quality Assurance and Transport Quality Assurance certification.

“I’m pretty proud of that,”



When it’s time to move cattle, Peter and Jay Bakken have learned that outcomes — health and performance of the animals— are better when cattle are handled humanely in a way that they’re not stressed. (Beef Quality Assurance image)

said deKoning, who took classes to be able to conduct the BQA certification training for local beef producers.

“It’s an extra service I can add for my producers so they don’t have to travel,” she said.

Her next BQA training isn’t for another three years, but if they’re enough interest, she said she would consider scheduling another one in between.

‘Gold standard’ for local beef production

The Bakkens were interviewed in October for a video about their Rock County operation that was shared at the National Cattlemen’s Association

Convention in Phoenix.

That video played on a jumbo screen Feb. 2 for roughly 6,000 people in the banquet hall while the Bakkens accepted their award on stage.

To be considered for the award, producers must have “a strong desire to continually improve Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) on their operations while encouraging others to implement the comprehensive cattle management program.”

Jay said business improvements just make sense.

“We’ve all figured out that the better you take care of the animals, the better they’ll perform for you.”

Dr. deKoning said producers like the Bakkens help to improve standards for all beef production.

“Jay and Peter are my gold standard for how things are done in my practice,” she said.

“They’re willing to talk to some of my other clients ... about how they handle situations. ... I can use them to influence how some of my other producers are going to do things.”

The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bLo-cp3I5k&app>.

watch?v=3bLo-cp3I5k&app.

“I’m a believer in the Beef Quality Assurance Program because it gives you some accountability and it’s about the last word, ‘assurance,’” Peter said at the end of the video.

“Why are we out here doing this? To provide a quality beef product to the consumer.”

The Bakken brothers (sons of Richard and Linda Bakken) are fourth-generation farmers and second-generation cattle feeders. Blac-X is an acronym for Bakken land and cattle.

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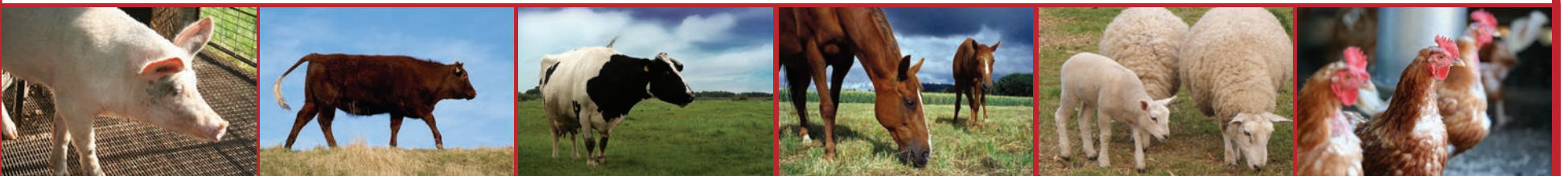
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