



FARMERS COOP ASSOC.
Forest City - Leland - Kiester

Farmers Co-op Assoc.

Forest City, Iowa - Leland, Iowa - Kiester, Minnesota

Countdown to 100 Years!

FIRST CLASS INVITE

To celebrate our 100 years of existence, our valued customers and their families will have the special opportunity to ride the first railroad passenger train in Forest City since 1956 at our June 25, 2016, celebration! That's right – we are bringing the Hawkeye Train from Coralville to our Forest City Depot. Ticketed passengers will experience a 45 minute air conditioned ride from our terminal to Miller and then return. A member of the Winnebago History Society will enlighten passengers about points of history along the route. If you wish to be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime historic experience, you will need a ticket. Stop by the Coop or call 641-585-2814 to reserve your time for noon, 2 pm, or 4 pm on June 25. When the tickets are gone, names will go on a reserve list. This will be exciting, educational, and something for all generations but you need a reservation!!! **ALL ABOARD!!!**



WEATHER

The upcoming season will be one of anticipation with El Nino declining, La Nina starting, and the Great Lakes having one of its earliest ice out dates will make for an interesting season. On March 31, the Great Lakes had only 1.2 percent ice cover compared to 45 percent last year and 68 percent in 2014. All are signs of the current El Nino weather pattern. Over the years a great indicator of our weather is to watch Arkansas weather during March. If dry, then Iowa usually will have a dry spring and vice versa. Total Little Rock rainfall average for March is 3.87 but up to March 30 they recorded 8.22 inches. Get out the pontoons!

FARMERS COOP ASSOCIATION HOURS

Beginning April 11 at our Forest City and Kiester Agronomy Locations

Monday-Friday 7:30 am to 5 pm
Saturday 7:30 am to Noon

CORN INFLUENCE?

There are a number of factors contributing to your corn yields every year. Here they are in order:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Weather - 27% | Genetics - 19% | Plant Population - 8% |
| Nitrogen - 26% | Crop Rotation - 10% | Tillage - 6% |
| | | Growth Regulator - 4% |

The interesting part is the influence of nitrogen. We find our farmers are becoming more aware of application and timing to conserve that expensive resource to the best of their abilities.

WELCOME TAMARA SHEEHAN



Farmers Coop Association has hired Tamara Sheehan to assist with human resources (HR) responsibilities for our business. This includes updating the employee handbook, writing job descriptions, and other responsibilities. Tamara works with us as a consultant and has been an asset already.

Tamara has over 15 years of HR and management experience spanning start-ups to established organizations along with a venture capital firm. She has extensive hands-on experience leading

HR initiatives including strategic development, performance management, organizational development, talent acquisitions, change management, employee relations and retention, workforce planning, group benefit administration, benchmarking, mergers and acquisitions, due diligence and integration, financial audits, and contract review and negotiations.

Tamara grew up on a farm outside of Leland, attended high school in Thompson, and has lived in California for 20 years. She moved back to Iowa to be closer to family and said the opportunity at the Coop has allowed her to use her skills and reconnect her with the agricultural community.



You see here a 1922 hog confinement. No manure management plan was filed with the DNR!

BAD NEWS

Last month a young customer farmer was starting his calving season. He suspected one cow would give birth during the night and he would celebrate in the morning the arrival of a new black calf on wobbly legs. Unfortunately, he found the remains of a coyote pack feeding frenzy which left him nothing for his nine month investment. For Americans to eat, it takes someone to take the risk betting against mother nature, markets or, in this case, local predators. We hope the best for all our cattlemen during calving season! (As a side note, one group of local coyote hunters have eliminated nearly 90 of the animals since last fall which will greatly help our 2016 pheasant populations.)

FOREST CITY

Address: 406 East K Street
Phone: 641-585-2814 or 800-483-6832
Fax: 641-585-2052

LELAND

Address: 609 B Street
Phone: 641-567-3341 or 888-676-7439
Fax: 641-567-3380

KIESTER

Address: 100 West Front Street
Phone: 507-294-3697 or 877-294-3697
Fax: 507-294-3540
Agronomy: 507-294-3427

DOWN AT THE CARDTROLS



Total gas consumption is up 3.5 percent nationwide since the first of the year. Inventories of oil and ethanol continue very high and any upswings in prices will see the market be rewarded from large stocks thus limiting rallies. (Sound familiar corn and bean producers?) But markets sometimes are unpredictable as crude oil was \$26 per barrel when Iran was released to sell into the world oil market driving prices lower. Instead of going down, oil went to \$40 per barrel!!!

Winners of \$10 free gas are [Loren Ehrich](#), [Kirk Jefson](#), [Thad Josten](#), and from Kiestler, [Brad Soma](#). Pumpin It Back 2 U recipients for April are [Forest City Post Prom](#) and [Kiestler Ambulance Service](#).

INTERESTING

Workers of some Tyson Meat processing plants filed a class action suit against Tyson. Their contention was Tyson required workers to put on protective clothing before entering the plant floor but were not paid for that time. The Supreme Court ruled four to two in favor of the workers for \$5.8 million to be paid workers for their time.

EXTRA CAUTION ADVISED

Perhaps new soybean genetics tolerant to 2,4-D and diacamba (Banvel) have caught your interest and you're ready to try them for those hard-to-kill, resistant weeds. Be it made known your sprayers, booms, and mixers need to be completely washed out a minimum of three times or carryover to your next herbicide application could damage those crops. If you don't like yield reducing surprises, follow the directions completely or you will pay! We still feel the best preventative is to spray a pre-emerge product just after planting.

April BBQ!? LP Bottle Refills Just \$8!



CASH BACK

One of the priorities of a Coop is to return profits back to the shareholders when available. This past week we sent out checks totaling \$81,000 to 463 members who did business with us in 2000 - 2002.

SPRING NH₃ REMINDER

By Kingsley Johnson



As we are rapidly approaching yet another spring season, many of our customers will be hauling and applying anhydrous ammonia. Ammonia is an efficient and widely used source of nitrogen. It is a product with several advantages as well as having some disadvantages and dangers in its use and handling. Before you start handling ammonia this spring I would like you to think about the safe handling of NH₃.

When towing nurse tanks:

- Use a vehicle large enough for the load
- Use a locking hitch pin
- Hook two safety chains crossed under the tongue of the trailer
- Check the tires for damage and inflation
- Stop at all railroad crossings
- Drive at a safe speed not exceeding 30 mph

When connecting or disconnecting a tank wear proper personal protective equipment:

- Ventless chemical goggles
- NH₃ resistant gloves that are cuffed
- Long sleeve shirt
- Long pants
- Do not wear contact lenses when working with NH₃
- Have a ready source of water plus an extra 5 gallons in the tractor in case you cannot get to the water on the nurse tank
- Never point a hose end directly at your body

First aid if you do come in contact with ammonia:

- Since NH₃ absorbs six times its weight in moisture, flushing or submerging in water is very important - this gives the ammonia an easy place to attach to doing less damage to your body
- Flush with water for at least 15 minutes

Have a safe and productive planting season!!

FROM THE AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT

The spring of 2016 is approaching and we will all soon be extremely busy. **Please set up an appointment with a member of our Agronomy Department** at your convenience for verification of planting intentions and chemical needs. We will still be following our 48 hour rule when it comes to timeliness of applications on your acres. Thank you for all your continued business and support!

FROM THE FEED DEPARTMENT

By Mitch Thorson



With the recent announcements of additional packing spaces being built in Mason City and Windom, along with new plants in Sioux City and in Michigan under construction, I think hog producers can be cautiously optimistic.

We were at the Hubbard swine seminar last week and one of the partners in the plant spoke and said of the 6 million head per year plant, 2 million will be needed from independent producers. The Prestage plant in Mason City and the plant in Windom are harvesting mostly their own hogs.

The majority of these hogs were processed somewhere else; this will open up shackle space.

The second speaker of the day talked about, "Controlling Your Own Destiny." He discussed knowing cost of production and risk management. The third speaker was Dr. Tim Loula from Swine Vet Center in St. Peter, Minnesota. He and his clinic are known throughout the world for their innovation and knowledge of the pork industry working mostly with independent producers. His theme was, "Those that do it 'Best' will get to do it." He also was very positive for the independent producer who does a real good job of managing cost of production and risk. With what looks like low feed costs for the near future, additional marketing opportunities and a growing world population, we can be optimistic about the future of independent pork production.