



N7295 Feed Mill Lane, Algoma, WI 54201

(RC) 920-837-2226, (LUX) 920-845-1528, (fax) 920-837-2372

www.riocreekfeedmill.com

Winter 2018 - 2019



We celebrated Christmas as a RCFM Family on December 1st at Moe's Corner. Pictured above is most of our team from 2018. Back row: Jesse Albert, Bradyn Willems, Shaun Willems, Kurt Krueger, Danny Haumschild, Sam Barta, Brandon Clark, Ryan Heiges, Josh DeGrave, Moe Neuzil. 3rd row: Dale Kinnard, Darren Barta, Adam Barta, Hayley Doell, Jake Barta, Bob Smith, Dylan Leonard, Audrey Kuske, Adam Villers, Gayheart Piesler, Kelly Pinchart. 2nd row: Jerry Barta, Bob Buresh, Tammy Barta, Jake Jandrin, Amanda Bliss, Marie Prodell, Tina Jandrin, Emily Jandrin, Tim Froelich. Front row: Amanda J Barta, Allison Barta, Karlee Haas. Missing are Faith Fenendael, Steve Karnitz, Travis Kinnard, Brandon Knoflicek, Stephanie Nagel, Dane Marach, Dan Rank, Zach Sutter, Olivia VanDonsel, Ashley Zellner ...and our beloved Andy.

Holiday Hours

12/24/18 CLOSED Christmas Eve
12/25/18 CLOSED Christmas Day
12/31/18 CLOSING AT NOON New Year's Eve
1/1/18 CLOSED New Year's Day

**NOTE: The feed mill may be open for delivering feed on Saturday 12/22 to make sure all the cows stay happy during our Christmas closure!

Adam's Ag Talk

Adam Barta, Certified Crop Advisor

2019 here we come. At this time



of year, we look back at our successes and failures of the past year. It is a great time to look for ways to improve in 2019. We need to evaluate our procedures; how they worked and those that need to be changed, be added, or eliminated. Certainly, we are all faced with difficult decisions. The challenges of the dry summer months, especially August, then the fall "monsoon" season, certainly kept us guessing during the 2018 growing season. During the harvest season, we've seen some yields that were moderately better than expected, while some growers are looking to put this year behind them. 2018 challenges included army worms marching into our area in June and the expansion of Glyphosate resistant water hemp. Check out Hayley's article for her recap on what she encountered while scouting this year. There was also a new disease, called Tar Spot, discovered in Kewaunee County. It is recognized by the black, raised spots on the leaves, which can cause premature death of

the plant. Tar Spot was first discovered in the United States in 2015 and has since spread to numerous Midwest states including several counties in Wisconsin. State universities have been evaluating best management practices, thresholds and characteristics of the disease. We will keep you up to date on the developments of this yield-robbing disease. We evaluated the performance of numerous crop protection products again this year. We are always looking for better options and solutions for control and cost effectiveness for our customers. We again saw great results from Acuron in both pre-emerge and post application on corn fields. We were impressed with the minimal activation of rainfall needed at planting time for Acuron to "get to work." While some resprays were required on our Pre-emerge Thundermaster/Boundary program, those products proved to be a great value for growers that took advantage of this option. Year after year, RCFM's YIELDshield for Wheat program has proven that it maximizes growers' yields and improves wheat quality and the likelihood of earning a \$0.10 premium. 2018 once again showed a profitable return on investment provided to our customers. This application truly is "Performance that Pay\$" for our wheat growers. 2019 will present a new set of challenges. In these tight economic times, we know we need to closely evaluate each input expense and assess its true value. We genuinely appreciate your past and continued patronage and never take it for granted. I look forward working with you this upcoming year, as together we do our part to feed the world!!

Lastly, as a company, we've been striving to provide the best possible products and services for 60 years, since Grandpa Don and Grandma Jeanette started RCFM in 1958. This wouldn't be possible without our team. We gratefully say thank you to each one of our employees and their families for their dedication to Rio Creek Feed Mill. Our co-workers pitched in to cover for each other, as they always do, during 2018. We had substantial absences due to injuries, sickness, and of course the passing of my brother, Andy. On both a personal and business level, there is a huge hole in our hearts. Andy is greatly missed by us all. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to say more in our tribute edition.

Shaun's Seed Corner

Shaun Willems; Operations Manager & Agronomy Sales



With another challenging harvest season in the books, we are reminded to start planning for the upcoming year. For the 2019 growing season, it may be a little confusing to find the hybrids that worked in the past on your farm because of seed companies buying smaller companies out or being acquired due to company mergers. We are currently offering the same quality seed hybrids that we have offered in the past, along with a few hybrids with new names. The first major change is instead of Great Lakes Hybrids, we will be selling LG Brand hybrids. Both companies were owned by Ag Reliant, which has discontinued use of the name Great Lakes. If you've grown Great Lakes before, you won't see a change in the quality, just a different name and number. We have seen a lot of high yields from different LG hybrids this year in high moisture and grain corn, along with quality silage earlier in the season. We will also continue to offer the same quality products from NK (Syngenta), with more hybrid options in the Enogen and Duracade line ups. Enogen research at leading

universities and farm trials around the state, including here in Kewaunee County, have shown an 8.4% dry matter per acre yield advantage over BMR hybrids, with 3.1 times more small particle starch digestibility, 14% higher total starch digestibility and a 10% increase in total digestible nutrients than BMR hybrids. Enogen feed silage is less prone to spoilage (due to a higher level of acetate) helping to reach a lower pH level more quickly. This means higher quality silage will reach stability sooner and be less prone to spoilage than other silage. With no technology fees, Enogen is priced well below BMR hybrids, making it one way to cut costs, while still achieving high quality feed. Legend Seeds has acquired Munson and Masters Choice brands, making them one of the largest independent companies in the US. They now have hybrid product lines from all the major seed companies, with very competitive pricing. We can cross reference what you are currently using and determine if we can help you save on your input costs, while still getting the same quality and genetics that you want. Wolf River Valley Seeds has conventional corn, floury leafy silage corn, and other traited hybrids that have performed well in our test plots over the past two years. They also offer forage oats and forage peas & oats that have shown high yields and superior quality over standard blends. For soybean growers, we are offering three different bulk options again this year, 1.0 LG C1000RX (X-tend), 1.2 Legend LS12X862N (X-tend) and 1.4 NK S14-A6 (RR2). These hybrids were chosen based on local plot data. They are high yielding, have a high tolerance to white mold and other common diseases, work well across all soil types and can be drilled or row cropped. We also offer a wide range of soybean hybrids that can be ordered in bags, poly totes, and bulk boxes for your convenience. We will offer the same proven seed treatment options as last year...CruiserMaxx (Insecticide & Fungicide), ApronMaxx (Fungicide) or inoculant alone (120-day with root growth promoter). Pricing will be similar to last year, with overall soybean hybrid pricing at or below 2018 prices.

For small grains, grass and pasture mixes, we will continue to offer LaCrosse seed mixes (Forage First). We have had years of success with their products and they are now part of the largest small seed company in the world (DLS Pickseed), so this should assure competitive pricing without sacrificing quality.

RCFM is proud to offer our Seed and General Agronomy Pre-Pay Extra Credit again this year (see below). Because of the delayed harvest and difficult fall weather, we realize that you probably haven't had a lot of extra time to think about next year's inputs, so we are extending the 7% pre-pay extra credit until 1-4-2019. Don't forget about Rabo and John Deere financing for your 2019 input needs. In addition, most seed companies are offering 0% fixed interest until November 2019 (LG) or December 2019 (NK and Legend). This can save you thousands of dollars in interest, while also taking advantage of early order discounts.

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text or e-mail me. I will be happy to meet with you and discuss all the options and products we have to offer. I would also like to thank all our customers for their support this year, especially with the passing of Andy. We are picking up the pieces and moving forward the best we can, but his knowledge is truly missed every day. We will continue to carry on the high standards and commitment to customer service and do our best to get you what you need, when you need it. Thank you for your orders in 2018 and I look forward to working with you in 2019. Stay safe and have a happy holiday season!

Seed & General Agronomy Prepay Incentives

Prepay for your 2019 crop inputs by the date below and receive the extra percentage on your money to use throughout the cropping season!

January 4, 2019	7%
February 1, 2019	5%
March 1, 2019	4%
March 29, 2019	3%
April 26, 2019	2%

if prepay dollars are cancelled for cash/credit on account, the extra credit percentage given will be taken back at time of cancellation

Hayley's Helpful Hints

Hayley Doell, NMP Specialist



As a little recap of our growing season this year, we started off with some moisture in the ground from the last big snow storm. It seemed that once it was time for planting, it was very dry, which led to emergence problems in all crops. It tested pre-emerge effectiveness, because you need rain to activate the ingredients into the soil. Disease pressure was low, with most wheat samples testing low in VOM. White mold was also not a large issue this year. There were a few cases confirmed early in the year, but that ground was untreated. The mold didn't have much effect on yield. Though this year was not favorable for diseases, next year might be different. There are products available to control disease and we can help you determine which is best one for your operation. The insect pressure, for the most part, was down this year. In my scouting, I saw very low insect populations in hay fields or aphids in soybeans. On the other hand, we had several army worm cases early on. They were feeding on everything from corn and oats to alfalfa and soybeans. They typically like to feed on grasses, but they were so heavily populated this year that they were feeding on

broadleaves too. The other insect we sprayed for this year was spider mites in soybeans. They were not as bad as the army worms, but there were a few cases we had to spray twice to get control. An issue to watch is Glyphosate resistant water hemp, which is going to get challenging for farmers to deal with. It is spreading, so we need to plan for it. Water hemp is the most problematic weed we've had to deal with in our area and poses unique threats, including resistance to Glyphosate, a late and wide window of emergence, aggressive growth, and reproducing up to 1 million seeds per plant. Switching to a pre-emerge spray application is one of the best ways to deal with this weed. We have a pre-emerge program that will target the Glyphosate resistant water hemp because we found that dealing with it early helps save your yields. There are post emergence options, but most lead to crop damage, reducing your yields, and are less effective on the weeds. Another option to control water hemp is selecting a seed that has a different trait such Liberty Link or X-Tend (beans) and using a different chemical. When we sit down to discuss your 2019 crop year, we can decide how to battle this issue on your farm. For the 2019 season, we will be offering one scouting program. This program will include eight visits for each field, consisting of service options from herbicide recommendations to yield estimates. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact me.

In the past, Zach was the main contact for writing Nutrient Management Plans. Over the summer, Zach moved to Madison, so this year I will be taking over the role as the main contact for sit down planning meetings. Shaun and Adam will also be available and helping write plans. I will have a calendar in the office with appointment times, so when you are ready, call the office and save a meeting time that works best for you. NR151 was passed and is now in effect on a state and county level, which affects farm land with sensitive areas, specifically shallow soils and karst features. With the recent rule changes and stricter setbacks, Rio Creek Feed Mill's new policy is that it's mandatory that you have a sit-down meeting with me, Shaun, or Adam before having a plan written. There is also a new checklist that requires farmers to sign the plan after it is written before it can be submitted to the county. There are a few things we need you to bring to your meeting. If you have manure, we need your manure hauling log. If you have a sample, that will also help make nutrient recommends more accurate. Be prepared to go over your maps more in depth than in past years. We need to make them as accurate as possible to make sure they follow the new standards. Some examples of things we will ask you to point out will be driveways, waterways, tile inlets, stone piles, and sinkholes. If you have any questions regarding your plan or the new rules, feel free to contact us. We look forward to meeting with you.

Jerry's Jargon

Jerry Barta, President



First of all, Tammy and I would like to thank all our customers, co-workers, friends, and neighbors for the prayers, compassion and generosity from our ag community since the passing of our son, Andy. It has been overwhelming. None of it will be forgotten, and of course, neither will he. We will have much more to say in a tribute edition we are working on.

When talking about the New Year coming up, the question is "How can we be profitable during the next growing season and be profitable also in the dairy and livestock business?" In this newsletter, we have some very good ideas for saving money and protecting the crops we grow. Use the information we offer to help you as much as possible.

People are asking if it's the right time to pre-purchase fertilizer. The current prices are \$30 - \$50 per ton higher than a year ago. Increased freight costs, due to the new trucking logbook regulations, have increased the costs of many ag products, but especially fertilizer. Unfortunately, it appears that it's highly likely that fertilizer prices will go up even more, due to a strong worldwide market,

especially if China reenters the U.S. ag markets. To limit your risk of the upside potential, we recommend that you pre-purchase at least a portion of your fertilizer needs, especially the nitrogen sources.

Last but not least, Rio Creek Feed Mill has no choice other than to be stricter than ever, enforcing a new credit policy. If your account is past due, your charging privileges will be handled on a case by case basis. A credit limit for crop inputs needs to be mutually agreed upon by you, your lender and us before the spring planting season begins.

Let's count our blessings each day. That might seem more difficult to do some days than others. But like our son, Andy would say, "Take a step back." Look around us. We all have a lot to be thankful for.

Merry Christmas and Have a Happy & Safe New Year!

Winter

Stephanie's Nutrition Notes

Stephanie Nagel, Dairy Nutrition Consultant



What's new in the nutrition world lately? The answer is a lot. From having lots of ration changes, to finally getting into this year's fall corn silage and challenging milk economics, there is a lot going on!

This year, be on the watch for mycotoxins in corn silage. Recently, I pulled a few samples and all have come back positive for toxins in the medium to high range. The chart to right, from Dairyland Labs, shows two different

toxins and mold. Notice the difference in the population of the dots on the chart. The dots have a heavier concentration over the October 2018 sample plot. Also take note of what your cows are telling you. Do you see a decrease in reproduction performance, inconsistent manure, loss of body condition/sheen on the cows' coats? If so, you may be dealing with the effects of toxins in your feeds. Feel free to reach out to me if you would like a second opinion or would like to test your corn or corn silage for toxins.

As for economics, we are no stranger to the low milk prices that we are experiencing. With commodity prices being low, what are a few different tools you could use to tighten up margins?

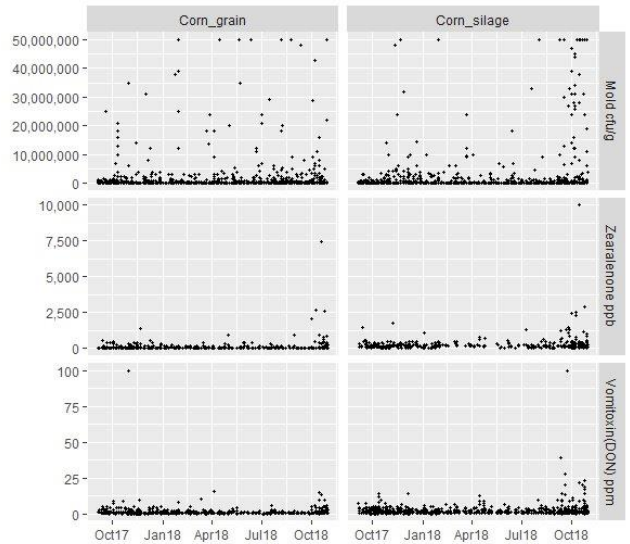
-Find your most economical income over feed costs? Really sit down and pencil what your income over feed cost is. Sometimes the most milk isn't always the most profitable. How much does it cost to produce one pound of milk?

-Focus on components. Keep an emphasis on this. Each plant pays different premiums. Sit down with your field person and see how they pay on components. There are ways to get more components out of your feeds. All you have to do is ask your nutritionist!

Keep an eye on breeding. What are your days in milk? Services per conception? These are two questions I like to ask producers. Milking stale cows doesn't help you in the long run. Your goal for days in milk should fall around 165.

Lastly, here are a few other items to keep in mind. Rio Creek Feed Mill will be hosting a fresh cow transition workshop in January or February. We will feature fresh cow strategies to help with nutrition, vet work, and management techniques. It is sure to be an interesting meeting! Watch our website and Facebook for an announcement on the date.

We will also be expanding our inoculant line! Watch for "early bird" booking discounts and special pricing on these new products



Andy Barta

January 16, 1983 – August 29, 2018
Rio Creek Feed Mill, General Manager

On August 29th, we lost our General Manager, Andy, after his 3-year battle with colon cancer. While leading Rio Creek Feed Mill was a large part of Andy's life; he, as a person, was so much more! A husband, father, son, brother, and friend to all, Andy leaves a hole no one can fill within our organization and our lives. Watch your mail for a Tribute Edition this winter honoring Andy's life and the legacy he leaves behind.