



Agricultural Consulting Services, Inc.

“Helping You Grow Your Business”

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FAST FACTS

WHO KNEW... Interested in buying GPS technology? Read this article before making your purchase:
http://www.agweb.com/Get_Article.aspx?pageid=156118



WHO KNEW... Do you run a food packing, processing, and/or storage operation and are interested in achieving food safety compliance? ACS's food safety division would be happy to help you achieve compliance. Visit ACS's food safety tab on the website:
<http://www.acsoffice.com/Foodsafety.aspx>

WHO KNEW... There's 2 new DEC Special Permit Training Classes for Non-Certified Applicators & Handlers coming up in Wayne and Orleans Counties. Contact Christy Hoepting at 585-721-6953 for more details.

UPDATES & TIPS FROM YOUR SERVICE MANAGER

- Nitrogen should be going out on wheat. It is better to make 2 trips for fertilizer and herbicide. Need a steady 50 degrees for Herbicides to work.
- Make sure your Service Manager knows your corn varieties and especially your refuge varieties for every field. The refuge doesn't always have the same traits. Let us know when your seed arrives and we can come and check the tags.
- FAX in all manure applications on a weekly basis so you are not buying more fertilizer than needed.
- Make sure you we know where you injected, incorporated or broadcasted manure.
- Take new manure samples for every product that goes on your fields. Spring manure and Fall manure samples often are very different and you want the best information you can get of what is actually going out there.
- Topdress grass and pastures as conditions allow.
- If you are using a Nitrogen Stabilizer in your manure or Fertilizer, make sure we know so we can adjust your fertilizer rates accordingly.

PLANNER UPDATE: NEW YORK CAFO PERMIT LAW UPDATE

Written by Planner, Brian Boerman

ACS recently obtained a memo from the Water Permit Division of the EPA Office of Water dated March 2010, updating ACS as to the EPA's position on the US adoption of the 2008 EPA CAFO rules. This was the EPA rule that forced New York to create a State Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) permit in addition to a Clean Water Act (CWA) permit. In this memo, the most significant information that the EPA mentions is that it is giving states until December 4, 2010 to finalize their state Clean Water Act Permits. What this means for New York is that we are not likely to see a new Clean Water Act Permit until late this year. It is the opinion of the ACS CAFO planners that there is no need for existing Large CAFO's to seek coverage under the New York State ECL permit now and that only Medium CAFO's should consider applying for the ECL permit. There are two reasons that large CAFO's need not file for the ECL permit. First, the Clean Water Act permit is only available in draft form and a final opinion about the permit cannot be determined until it is available later this year. Secondly, there is a Nutrient Management Plan submittal requirement for Large CAFO's seeking the ECL permit. This process and the paperwork to be submitted to the general public is comprehensive and however unavoidable with future permits, a deliberate and planned submission is warranted. By not filing for the ECL permit now, your farm will continue to be covered under the old CWA permit which has no public access requirement to your farm's CAFO plan. The logic behind Medium CAFO's signing up for the ECL permit now is that there is no Nutrient Management Plan submittal requirement for them and that this permit allows for the extension of Best Management Practice implementation to 2012 or even 2014 under certain situations.

FIELDS & CROPS TIP

“In preparing for the planting season, take a look at your Crop/Variety listings in Farm Setup. For each Variety, you can set Traits to track like BMR or Roundup-Ready and later on in the season view which fields have been planted with these traits by running the *Planting List [Trait filter]* report. Also, the software can track Time to Harvest (TTH) for each Variety. Just set the TTH type to Days or Heat Units and then supply a number for that type in the TTH column. Then the software can calculate an estimated harvest date in the Planting log. To view these listing, run either the *Planting Crops Log By Variety By Date* or *Planting Crops Log by Estimated Harvest Date* report.”

CROP SENSORS COULD BE NEXT BIG THING IN FARMING TECHNOLOGY

By Josh Flint and Tom J. Bechman from www.PrairieFarmer.com

With tractors that nearly drive themselves, implements that turn off automatically and a computer keeping track of every pass, the logical question is, "What's next?". Crop sensing is one technology that's been in the works for more than a decade. Ag Leader's OptRx system, which goes commercial this year, uses an optical sensor to determine the biomass and "greenness" of the plant. An onboard processor then dispenses nitrogen based on what the crop sensor sees.

Roger Zielke, Ag Leader's new business development manager, says last year's test results showed the profitability behind this technology. The system usually applied more N than the farmer's typical straight rate. However, Zielke says the extra N resulted in a yield increase worth \$15 to \$45 per acre, compared to the flat-rate application. OptRx costs \$3,000 per sensor. Zielke recommends three sensors for toolbars up to 60 feet. In addition, the rate processor (Ag Leader calls it a CAN module) is \$1,500. According to Zielke, the system can be used for all types of N. Ag Leader recommends using the technology at side-dress, when plants are at least V5, or 12 to 18 inches tall. University professors agree it is possible to apply N based on the plant's "greenness." However, the big question is, "How tall does the plant have to be for color to accurately represent how much N is available?"

When does it work? Purdue University's Bob Nielsen and Jim Camberato have been working with a similar crop sensor for several years now. "We're very comfortable that in waist-high corn, we can do a good job of selecting differences in N and determining which areas ought to receive extra N at that point," Nielsen says. However, if the corn is shorter than waist-high, the results aren't as conclusive. "We even tried it on V8 corn, which is at the top edge of what you would want to side-dress, but so far we can't say that we've picked up differences in N that would let us make recommendations at that stage," he says. "However, we remain enthused with the potential for these sensors for 'dialing in' those last 50 or 75 pounds of N in a high-clearance application scenario," Nielsen adds.

Fabian Fernandez, University of Illinois soil fertility professor, agrees a good time to assess the amount of N based on color would be around V10 to V12, or waist high. At this point, the plant has taken up about 20% to 30% of its total N need. Nielsen and Fernandez both see value in the concept, but the question remains: "At what growth stage do crop sensors detect a viable difference in N content?"



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