

Weekly Article

Fall Harvest and Round up

10-6-2020

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. This past week was a busy week for many grain crop producers. With multiple cool dry days, farmers were able to get out in the field and start harvest. I was able to harvest some of my soybeans and make it to the local elevator this week, there was no long lines to wait in, but the traffic flow of grain trucks and tractors were steady. Soybeans was the main crop being delivered. Grain quality look to be excellent and test waits look decent if the moisture levels stayed around the 12-13% range. With the dry fall soybeans are drying fast, some moisture levels have reached 10%. There is expected rainfall for the beginning of the week but after that things should dry out and allow harvest to continue.

The nice fall weather has also allowed beef cattle producers to start their feeder cattle roundup. For the most part most producers still spring calve and sell feeders in the fall. I contacted some stock yard that saw a sum of 300-400 head of feeders delivered last week. And prices varied from 1.25- 1.45 for a 550 lb calf that had all their shots, weaned 45 days, castrated, and healed, and dehorned if needed. These extra steps can fetch premiums upward to 10- 15 cents per pound in todays market. The term given to these steps or process is preconditioning. Preconditioning is the basics of conditioning an animal for a new environment. If you decide to precondition your calves on the farm here are some important steps to consider before doing so.

1. Do not overload the calves with stress at once- Put yourself in a calf's hooves for a moment. What if someone were to take you from your family and give you 3-4 different shots or blow something strange up your nose, put a tag in your ear, CASTRATE (for all those male farmers) and then load you up in a trailer and take you far away from home to mix you with different people. I don't know about you, but I believe I would be pretty stressed out! Make sure to have all these practices done prior to weaning.
2. Have clean water available. Research has shown that calves will increase water intake during the weaning period to compensate for lack of their mothers' milk. If you have open tanks clean regularly to prevent algae, feed, or feces from contaminating the water. Automatic ball waters should be adjusted to allow new calves to easily drink. I usually lock the ball down so the water is exposed. Taking the ball completely out for a few weeks works even better.

3. Provide Long, loose, high quality grass hay. This allows the calf to have something to chew on making the weaning process easier.
4. Make sure the environment is clean. If you have a barn or feedlot, make sure manure is scraped routinely and ventilation is good. If calves are outside in a pasture, make sure there is plenty of shade in the warmer seasons to reduce stress.
5. Finally start marketing, having your calves separated from the rest of the herd allows you show buyers how well your calves are managed, giving them faith to buy your stock.

Some other details to go over is

- USDA will be providing direct assistance to farmers impacted by Corona virus for the second time this year. Producers can contact the FSA office to sign up for their second round of payments for 2020. Sign up deadline is December 11th, 2020 you should call before coming to the office. The phone number to call is (937) 544 2033.
- Adams Soil and Water Conservation District is collecting Common Milkweed Pods throughout the month of October, call (937) 544-2033 or go to adamssoilandwater.org for details.
- Check out my survey for local crop yields, I would appreciate your help in constructing a local hybrid/ variety utilization spreadsheet for the growing season 2021. The survey can be found at adams.osu.edu and Adams OSU Facebook page.
- I am considering a meeting later this fall or winter based on climate change and how it is affecting your farm operation and the public. There is a survey on both our web site and Facebook page.

From the Field

In scouting field conditions for Adams County, the following is things I have noticed.

1. Soybean Harvest is in full swing with yields ranging from the mid - 50s to low 70s
2. Corn Harvest has started and looks like average to above average yields, should know better in a few weeks.
3. Wheat planting has started, and cover crops are being seeded after soybean harvest.
4. Some fall tillage is being done mostly vertical tillage or disking.
5. Fall fertilizer application mostly Potash (0-0-60) and ag lime.
6. Fall feeder cattle weaning.
7. Most gardens have been mowed down and seeded to cool season brassicas such as radishes and turnups.