

Weekly Article

Lessons Learned from COVID 2020

10-20-2020

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. The last week of October looks to be another soggy wet week. The last 10 days have brought rainfall amounts throughout the county to 1.5 -2" of precipitation. This has put a halt to the soybean and corn harvest. Last Thursday and Friday many producers were able to hit the fields and get some crops harvested but we have a long way to go before harvest is complete.

With the wet weather I have been catching up on records and paperwork in the farm office. I have also had some time to reflect on just what 2020 has done to the face of agriculture on a national and local level. Most producers would agree that the Corona Virus pandemic has surely made some changes to how we do business and farm. So here are some lessons that I have noted and should be considered for the year 2021.

- Be ready for change- just like the rest of the population producers were in a constant state of confusion during the spring. With news and updates changing by the minute. Not only does this make it hard to make a production decision, this makes it hard to focus on the task at hand. This taught me to stay focused as always on being efficient. No matter if you are producing corn and soybeans or raising hogs and cattle, maintaining good records, and using BMP's (Best Management Practices) on the farm is important.
- Have a marketing plan- Many producers are in the habit of thinking that I will raise it, and someone must buy it. COVID 19 threw this way of thinking out the window. Just because you have 20 head of fat cattle ready to sell does not mean the buyer is ready to buy. Put together a marketing plan that is adjustable for times of uncertainty or change. Having a good relationship with buyers well before the animals are ready to be sold is important. Think about alternative markets such as freezer beef and local markets. I truly believe that the way consumers buy their meet and produce will change due to the pandemic.
- Where can the farm improve- with many of our customers being locked down and spending more time at home, there is more focus on who is the farmer producing my food? Think about how your operation can improve and be more open and appealing to consumers. Do not be afraid to tell your farm story!

- Stay connected and informed - In today's world news travels fast and is constantly changing. Keep informed on marketing opportunities and news that can have a direct effect on your farm operation.

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.
- 2021 elections for Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs opened October 13th and will close March 15th, 2021. Contact the ladies at Farm service Agency about signing up for one of these programs (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.
- Our new 2020 Plat Books are for sale. Call the office to make an appointment to buy one at (937) 544-2339
- 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 this 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. The wet weather has slowed harvest down considerably.
2. Some lodging issues in soybeans that have not been harvested.
3. Wheat planted a few weeks ago looks to be in good condition emergence looks good.
4. Pasture conditions are improving with the recent rainfalls.
5. Watch corn stalk integrity and ear strength. Many ears have dropped and are prone to dropping off as the many decay.
6. Young mairstail rosettes emerging, still not to late for a fall application of 2-4-D
7. Watch for annual bluegrass and chickweed emerging in newly seeded wheat.