

**Inside Grundy County**  
**By: Rod Hamer, Grundy County Transitional Coordinator**  
**December 11, 2009**

We have been spoiled by harvesting conditions in recent years. Normally “too dry” is a problem with soybean harvest. This year many never harvested a soybean at market moisture (13%) or below and relied on artificial drying or aeration for the first time in their farming careers. Corn harvest was slowed by high grain moistures, on-farm and commercial dryer capacity, and later by LP availability. Drying costs were higher than anticipated and will reduce profitability. The wet grain doesn’t flow and is more difficult to handle creating problems with bearings, belts, shafts, and augers. Variable moistures in a bin and excessive/uneven distribution of fines and foreign material have made it difficult to get a uniform drying/aeration front, have stressed in-bin stirrators, and resulted in some dryer fires.

The 2009 harvest is nearly complete. It has been a challenging year from start to finish. In spite of all the difficulties, record or near record yields were reported by many. The crop reporting service has estimated corn and soybean yields for 2009. The state wide corn yield was estimated to be 183 bushels per acre; this is compared to 162.7 bushels per acre for the last ten year average. In the central reporting district (where Grundy County is located) reports the average was 177 bushels per acre for 2009 compared to 171 bushels per acre for the 10 year average. Soybeans yields were: 51 bushels per acre state wide compared to the 10 year average of 46.6 bushels per acre. The central district yields were also 51 bushels per acre compared to 10 year average of 48.5 bushels per acre. When Grundy County yields are determined we will report them.

The DNR encourages livestock producers to become familiar with a new law regarding manure application on frozen and snow-covered ground. Among other livestock-related bills passed this spring, Governor Culver signed this bill, Senate File 432, last week. Part of this new law restricts surface manure application on frozen or snow-covered ground, except for emergencies. It applies only to liquid manure from confinement producers – those with completely roofed facilities. Also, it applies only to producers who are required to submit a manure management plan to the DNR. “For the most part, the law will affect confinement producers with hog operations housing 1,250 or more finishers and dairy operations with 350 or more dairy cows,” said Gene Tinker, coordinator of DNR’s animal feeding operations. Tinker said the law prohibits surface application of liquid manure on snow-covered ground from December 21 to April 1. It also prohibits surface application of liquid manure on frozen ground from February 1 to April 1. This part of the bill will become effective on July 1, 2009, meaning that liquid manure application will be restricted this coming winter. Affected producers can check provisions of the law at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/index.html>. They should look under Enrolled Bills 2009; then scroll down to SF 432. The law does not prohibit winter application of dry, solid or bedded manure. However, producers should manage all manure carefully to avoid causing water quality violations. This information is from Gene Tinker, Iowa Department of Natural Resources.