



## FIELD&FEEDLOT a monthly agriculture publication for Northwest Iowa

### October 2020

#### In this Issue:

Online References .....	1
Numbers to Know .....	1
Harvest 2020.....	1
Six Simple Safety Tips .....	2
New Records in Dairy .....	3
2020 Fall Feedstuffs .....	3-4
Upcoming Events .....	4

#### Online References

##### Ag Decision Maker

[www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/)

##### Iowa Beef Center

[www.iowabeefcenter.org](http://www.iowabeefcenter.org)

##### Manure Management Action Group

[www.agronext.iastate.edu](http://www.agronext.iastate.edu)

##### Iowa Pork Industry Center

[www.ipic.iastate.edu/](http://www.ipic.iastate.edu/)

##### ISU Extension Dairy Team

[www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam)

##### Locate a County Office

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/countyservices/>

#### Numbers to Know

AnswerLine 800-262-3804

Beginning Farmer Center 877-BFC-1999

Hortline 515-294-3108

Iowa 2-1-1 211

Iowa Concern 800-447-1985

Iowa Healthy Families 800-369-2229

Teen Line 800-443-8336

### Harvest 2020 in Northwest Iowa

*Kris Kohl, Ph.D., P.E., Ag Engineering Specialist*  
712-732-5056 or [kkohl1@iastate.edu](mailto:kkohl1@iastate.edu)

Corn harvest this year looks like it will be easy compared to the last 10 years. The moisture will be less than 20 percent with much of it coming out of the field dry. This may be the only bright spot in 2020.

Normally corn dries down in the field as follows:

- September - 4 to 5 points per week
- October - 2 points per week
- November - 1 point per week
- December - 1 point per month

Most of the corn matured by September 7 this year, allowing for great dry down in September unlike in 2019, when October 1 was the maturity date. During this October, I expect a lot of corn to come straight out of the field at 15 percent or less.

The average moisture may be below 15 percent, but often on a single ear the moisture at the butt end is 3 to 4 points more wet than the tip kernels. For this reason, farmers should run the fans at least one day a week until we get the temperature of the grain down below 40 degrees F. Fines will still be an issue and coring the bin when half full and completely full is still recommended. It is also important to level after this final coring so that the air travels uniformly through the grain especially in the center where the fines accumulate.

The final aeration run is needed in November to keep the corn cool. It is said that more corn goes bad because of improper temperature control than to wet, so make sure that the corn and soybeans get cooled this fall.

Road safety is a big deal for everyone during harvest as tractors and combines high speed is still very slow compared to a car or pickup. Slow moving signs and lights help to be seen and are required. A very common accident occurs when a combine or tractor is signaling a left-hand turn but swings a little to the right to see around the wagons before turning left. All of us need to slow down and make sure that we don't try to pass when there is a good chance the slow farm implement will turn into the passing lane.

This year should have the smoothest harvest in a decade, which is something to smile about. Be safe and have a good harvest season.

## Six Simple Tips for a Safe Harvest Season

Joel DeJong, Field Agronomist  
712-546-7835 or [jldejong@iastate.edu](mailto:jldejong@iastate.edu)

Harvest time is here. Over the years I have known many people who suffered from accidents that occurred on the farm, and with the pressure of harvest time, it seems that accidents are more frequent this time of year. So, for this column, I am adapting an ISU Integrated Crop Management Blog post from Ryan Bergman, Program Coordinator in Ag Technology at ISU. Here are 6 simple safety tips to maintain throughout the season to keep yourself and your crew out of harm's way.

1. **Keep your machine's safety features, mirrors and windows clean both in and out of the field** - Grain carts are one of the most commonly used pieces of equipment during harvest, but they also have the most potential for blind spots. Therefore, it's important to keep the safety features available in good working order. Check your cart's turn signal and brake lights prior to leaving each field to ensure safe operation down the road.  
  
Be sure to regularly wipe any dust or debris from safety reflectors, lights and mirrors on your grain cart, wagons, combine and tractors both in the field and on the road. If your cart or wagon doesn't come with turn signal lights, a backup strobe can be used to make your implement more visible in low light situations. Keep glass cleaner and paper towels or rags in your cab to clean your machine daily.
2. **Inspect your PTO's safety shields** - The Power Take Off (PTO) can cause severe injury without proper safety precautions. NEVER step over the PTO shaft, either while it is running or when it is not in operation - always take a few extra seconds and walk around the equipment. Inspect the guards on all PTO shafts every season. With the tractor turned off and the key stored in the operator's pocket, use one hand to spin the shield 360°. If the guard can spin without stopping or turning the power drive train, the shield is working properly.
3. **Look out for stray metal and other debris** - Be observant as you harvest your fields, watch out for large debris that could seriously damage your machines and slow down your harvest. If you do experience a plug in your corn head, follow this procedure to safely remove it.
  - a. Bring the combine to a stop and back up a few feet so the head of the combine is over harvested crop.
  - b. Bring the combine's threshing element to a slow speed on idle.
  - c. Open the deck plates as wide as they will go.
  - d. Using the reverser switch for the head, lightly bump the switch in reverse a few times to see if the plugged material becomes dislodged. If the material does not become dislodged, stop running the head. Constant running of the head can cause damage to the slip clutch, making it weak and creating excess heat.
  - e. Follow the combine lockout procedure (<https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/blog/ben-covington-ryan-w-bergman/video-proper-combine-lockouttagout-procedures>) before ever working around or under a raised combine head. Make sure all hydraulics and shafts are removed from the combine and safety cylinder block/stops are applied.
  - f. Using cut resistant gloves, grab a handful of material at a time and slowly begin pulling it out of the snapping rolls. Be careful; there might be something, including sharp objects, lodged in the snap rolls.
4. **Be aware of your crew's location** - A good practice is to honk the horn of the combine or tractor three times before starting the machine or engaging the components so other members of your crew know the machine is moving, and to give them time to move out of the way and remove themselves from moving parts.
5. **Check your tow ropes and chains when extracting stuck equipment** – This might not be an issue this year, but it's important to know how to stay safe when pulling out a stuck tractor or combine. When possible, use tow ropes in good condition instead of chains. If only chains are available, inspect them to make sure both ends are in good condition and the chain itself does not have any broken, bent or weak links. Be sure that the pulling machine and the chain are large enough to tow the weight of the stuck machine. Never stand between a stuck vehicle and the implement towing it. It's best to stand far way and communicate with the operator of the equipment using either cell phones or two-way radios.
6. **Be conscious of your mental health and seek help when necessary** - Be mindful of your own mental health, as well as that of your employees, co-workers and family. For help dealing with stress, disaster relief and legal matters, refer to [www.extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/iowaconcern/) or call 1-800-447-1985.

I hope your harvest season is safe this year!

## New Records in the Dairy Industry; But What is Ahead?

*Fred Hall, Dairy Program Specialist*  
712-737-4230 or fredhall@iastate.edu

As I pen this article, CME spot Cheddar block prices rocketed up 22.75¢ today, by far the largest daily advance on record. Blocks have rallied by more than \$1/lb. from their mid-August low, recouping nearly 75 percent of the ground lost when block prices plummeted from their all-time high of \$3/lb.

Spot butter is up 6.75¢, on Tuesday traders swabbed 46 loads of butter at the CME spot market, the highest count for a single session since 2004. Spot butter prices climbed 11.75¢ from last Friday, pushing out of the narrow trading range that had prevailed for the past six weeks. CME spot nonfat dry milk followed suit climbing 3¢ to \$1.07, a six-month high.

The administration announced the second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) to offset agricultural losses for commodities whose late-July prices were at least 5 percent lower than they were in mid-January. Dairy payments will be based on a 60-40 blend of December Class III and IV futures, resulting in payments of \$1.20/cwt for actual production in April through August and estimated production in September through December.

Producers have been riding a rough bronc for most of 2020. The All Milk price fell by 31 percent from January to May, rebounding by 51 percent from May to July with the best guess that August All Milk will decline by 30 percent.

As dairymen do when production controls were lifted and better prices loomed, July milk production increased by 1.5% YOY.

After record cheese inventories in April, stocks saw a drawn-down leaving inventories just 2.4 percent higher than last year. However, butter stocks were 13 percent higher than July 2019 levels and dry whey was 27 percent higher. Total disappearance however increased by 0.7 percent in the second quarter driven by export growth of 20 percent offsetting a 2.4 percent decline in domestic demand.

Best predictions are for milk production to increase through the second quarter at 1.5 percent. World production seems to also be on the rise for that same time period.

Today's fourth quarter Class III milk averaged \$18.60 with November up the limit. First quarter 2021 Class III milk was all up, averaging \$16.60. With the potential second wave of COVID-19, economic recession and a potential regime change in Washington, my crystal ball is pretty murky. The best advice is to use a risk management tool to protect at least half of your production. Each program has some merit. The point is to be proactive in managing risk.

## 2020 Fall Feedstuffs Reminders

*Beth Ellen Doran, Beef Program Specialist*  
712-737-4230 or doranb@iastate.edu

This fall and winter, cattle producers in NW Iowa will be dealing primarily with drought-stressed feedstuffs, which present their own set of challenges.

- **Water** – streams are running very slow, if at all, and ponds are stagnant. Both are ideal conditions for the development of blue-green algae. This algae produces toxins affecting the nervous system and liver and can be deadly if consumed. Clean water is a MUST for cattle. A word of caution – make sure the tank used to haul water does not have pesticide residue in it.
- **Regular Hay** – early rains delayed harvest of the first crop for many producers, and drought has affected recent cuttings. In both cases, the hay may contain more lignin and not be as digestible. It will be important to sample this hay and send it to a commercial laboratory for nutrient analysis. More than likely, it will be lower in energy and protein. Supplementation with corn will help balance the energy and adding distillers grains to the ration will provide extra protein.
- **CRP Hay** – book values for energy and protein would suggest that the nutrition of CRP hay is similar to cornstalk bales, which is very low. Hence, supplemental energy, protein and vitamins and minerals will be needed.
- **Corn Silage** – don't get in a hurry to open up your silage piles! Much of the corn this year has a developed ear, but not all. Development of the ear is important as it serves as a sink for nitrates to be converted to crude protein. If you had fields with underdeveloped ears, there is the possibility that the silage may contain higher levels of nitrate, which can be toxic to cattle. The good news is that if the silage you chopped had high nitrates levels, four-to-five weeks of proper fermentation can reduce the nitrate levels up to 40 percent. Plan to test drought-affected silage for nitrate level prior to feeding and dilute with low nitrate feeds, if needed. Yes, there is a cost for the laboratory analysis, but this minimal compared to having a dead animal!
- **Grazing Cornstalks** – cattle grazing cornstalks are not at as high of a risk for nitrates because they will select the nubbins, leaves and shucks which have low nitrate levels. Plan to move the cattle to a new field when they have cleaned up these plant parts and do NOT force them to eat the stalks. Stalks will contain the highest levels of nitrates. Another caution – before turning cattle into a cornstalk field, check for piles of corn on the ground and the amount of ears that dropped. With drought this year, the stalks were not as strong and even minor winds caused some lodging. (continued on next page)

If there is a lot of corn remaining after combining, there are two alternatives – limit the area that will be grazed daily with cross-fencing or limit the amount of time the cattle are allowed to graze daily. Feeding them hay prior to turning them out to graze will also help prevent overconsumption.

- **Corn** – Blue-eye mold, which is a blue line down the center of the corn germ, was reported in old crop corn. Elevators and corn processing plants may discount this corn as damaged. If blue-eye mold is apparent, send a sample to a commercial lab to test for mycotoxins. Drought-stressed, new crop corn has its own issues – test weight, mold and the potential development of mycotoxins. Research would suggest that light test weight corn will not store more than a couple of months, so plan on feeding it first. For feedlot cattle, corn with a test weight in the high 40's will likely be within the 95% of the feeding value of normal corn; whereas, corn in the high 30's to low 40's will be within 90% of normal feeding value.

With any feed, the presence or absence of visible mold is not a good indicator of whether mycotoxins are or are not present. But, drought-stressed, new crop corn will be more prone to aflatoxin, vomitoxin, fumonisin and other mycotoxins. There is a basic mycotoxin test that can determine what mycotoxins are present and their level. Last, but not least – for your protection, it is advisable to wear a mask when handling corn containing molds and mycotoxins.

## Upcoming Events

Oct. 1 • **Applicator Training Reshow** at 9:00 a.m. • Primghar (Call Marsha at 712-957-5045 to schedule.)

Oct. 1 • **Applicator Training Reshow** at 1:00 p.m. • Primghar (Call Marsha at 712-957-5045 to schedule.)

Oct. 4-10 • **National 4-H Week** • All Counties

Oct. 6, 13, 20 or 27 • **Question. Persuade. Refer. Suicide Prevention Training** at Noon to 1:00 p.m. • Online

Oct. 15 • **Commercial Manure Applicator Training Reshow** at 8:30 a.m. • Orange City

Oct. 21 • **Roadside, Forest & Aquatic Pest Management Continuing Instruction** at 9:00 a.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

Oct. 21 • **Roadside, Forest & Aquatic Pest Management Continuing Instruction** at 1:00 p.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

Oct. 28 • **ServSafe** at 8:30-5:30 p.m. • Northwest Iowa Community College, Sheldon

Oct. 28 • **Mosquito/Public Health Pest Continuing Instruction** at 9:00 a.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

Oct. 28 • **Mosquito/Public Health Pest Continuing Instruction** at 1:00 p.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

Nov 4 • **Ornamental and Turfgrass Continuing Instruction** at 9:00 a.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

Nov 4 • **Ornamental and Turfgrass Continuing Instruction** at 1:00 p.m. • Cherokee (limited class size)

*Field & Feedlot* is published monthly by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Agriculture and Natural Resources Field Specialists. Inquiries about the publication and/or how you can receive it in your inbox each month can be sent to Kiley Biedenfeld at [kkaufman@iastate.edu](mailto:kkaufman@iastate.edu) or 712-957-5045.

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 209  
Cherokee, Iowa

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Extension and Outreach  
Cherokee County  
209 Centennial Dr  
Cherokee, IA 51012