

CHARGE IT!...with Farm Plan

- * Crocker's now offers Farm Plan for qualified, interested parties.
- * Special rates & terms, deferred up to March 2009, are available to pre-approved applicants.
- * For more information, please call Kevin Koch, Credit Manager, at the LeRoy Office (768-8210) or cell (585-329-6130).

Chemical Outlook 2008...

While the chemical industry has not experienced the wide-range dramatic upswings that the fertilizer industry has seen the past two seasons, that is not true for all the products. With the growth in no-till and Roundup® Ready crops, glyphosate demand is greater than the current global supply. This supply shortage has jumped glyphosate costs. Atrazine inventories have also been "sucked up" by foreign growers

and left U.S. supplies short-changed. Princep® is also difficult to source. More chemicals are expected to be added to this inventory list as we get closer to our growing season in NY. However, overall, the chemical pricing and availability on most products will be fairly stable for '08. Planning ahead and ordering early will help you avert possible shortages.

"It is thus with farming: if you do one thing late, you will be late in all your work"

- Cato the Elder

Thank you for choosing CEC & best wishes for a safe & successful 2008!

"Serving Agriculture for over 75 years"

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Information contained herein was obtained from multiple sources and publications. Changing commodity, fertilizer, &/or ag chemical markets may make some information outdated or obsolete.

**Pioneer® Seed:
Come Grow with Us**

CEC is an authorized Pioneer dealership. We continue to grow this essential part of our business, which is made easier by Pioneer's industry leading technology. In 2009, pending regulatory approval, Pioneer plans to launch Phase1, the first "in-the-bag" seed refuge system, Optimum® Acre-

Max™1. This product will eliminate the need for a farmer to plant a separate corn root-worm refuge. Pioneer has also developed Ethanol hybrids, and DuPont and Arcadia Biosciences are collaborating to improve nitrogen efficiency in corn. But first and foremost, Pioneer continues to breed and develop leading corn and soybean genetics. Plant Pioneer seed and GROW WITH US!

**ID your
Fertilizer Tanks**

- **Easily simplify delivery of liquid fertilizer by marking your tank with a number.**
- **It is much easier to instruct the driver to fill "tanks 2 & 4", rather than the 3rd & 5th tanks from the east end of the southern most barn!**
- **Either a permanent marker or attachable number works!**

Do You Know this Guy?...

"I need a list of your employees and how much you pay them," said the agent.

"Well," replied the farmer, "there's my farm hand who's been with me for 3 years. I pay him \$600 a week plus free room & board..."

...then there's the cook. She's been here for 18 months, and I pay her \$500 a week, plus free room and board.

Then there's a half-wit who works 18 hours every day and does about 90% of all the work around here. He makes about \$30 a week, pays his own room & board, and I buy him a bottle of bourbon every Saturday night."

"That's the guy I want to talk to, the half-wit," says the agent.

"That would be me," replied the farmer.

CE-Crocker — Newsletter

Volume 7
Spring 2008



Fertilizer Outlook for 2008...

The top story heading into this Spring is the dramatic rise in fertilizer costs. The reasons are multi-fold and complex. Just as commodities have risen due to a combination of several factors, rather than a single one, so have the fertilizer markets.

The Asian markets are importing large quantities of both grains and fertilizers. China, once a grain exporter, is now a large importer. Due to their large demand for corn and soybeans, they are also importing vast amounts of fertilizer to produce better yielding crops. The declining value of the U.S. dollar helps the economics of these transactions. South America's and India's imports of fertilizer have also increased drastically in addition to several other countries.

Over 25 U.S. ammonia facilities have closed permanently since 1999 due to rising costs, increasing environmental regulations, and shrinking margins. Since fertilizer is a worldwide commodity, U.S. agriculture must now compete with other buyers. With the U.S. importing 75% of its urea nitrogen, increasing demand, lower dollar, and higher transportation costs are all contributing to unprecedented price levels. Additionally, low inventories,

ethanol demand spurred on by the new energy bill, grain pricing and plantings are factoring in to higher Urea and U.A.N. solution pricing.

DAP and MAP, dry phosphates, have seen the largest increases thus far. Worldwide demand, higher domestic use, declining U.S. inventories, coupled with the Tampa Ammonia price (used in DAP & MAP production) and the weakened U.S. dollar (notice a trend?) have all stressed out U.S. supplies.

Potash has been the product with the least availability thus far. Again, the world's appetite for potash has caused a U.S. shortage and increased prices. In 2007, we experienced record potash consumption worldwide. Demand is currently exceeding supply. Pricing to other markets is yielding higher returns than to the U.S. Reports have indicated a cost of \$4 billion dollars to add a new potash mine shaft—and this additional mine expansion still does not equal projected increased future world demand.

Liquid phosphates, 10-34-0 and 11-37-0, are subject to the same demands and shortages, and are be-

coming increasingly difficult to source and are at much higher levels.

In a nutshell, the world's appetite for fertilizer is at an all time high due to a desire to grow higher yielding, better quality crops at a time when we are experiencing record grain prices. The bottom line is the large fertilizer producers, who are owned by large corporations, are selling to the markets that will yield the highest returns for their shareholders.

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Attack Higher Planting Inputs

Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. With higher input costs, it is evermore important to maximize your yield potential. Don't risk yield loss by cutting corners. Remember, fertilizer is one of the largest factors affecting yields. Cutting fertilizer rates only saves you on one portion of your input costs—with yield loss almost guaranteed. Tillage, fuel, labor, seed, pesticides, rent/land costs, machinery expense/depreciation, etc will all remain fixed. But, that small initial savings at planting time will hit you "between the eyes" at harvest.

Soil tests are now more important than ever. Liming and maintaining the proper pH is a sound agronomic and economic investment. Banding fertilizer rather than broadcasting fertilizer wherever possible makes better utilization of crop nutrients. Better weed control is also of utmost importance in these higher value markets. Nitrogen stabilizers, such as Agrotain®, urease inhibitor to slow volatility on surface applied nitrogen, Agrotain®Plus urease and nitrification inhibitor for use with U.A.N. solution for surface applications or incorporation, or

Guardian® DF to prevent leaching and denitrification on incorporated nitrogen applications become much more cost effective at the current pricing levels. See the www.cecrock.com resource page for more details on these three products.

Other value-added products such as foliar nutrition, micronutrients, and other additives can return positive dividends at modest costs and little to no extra labor. (see following article on Value-Added Products)

We're on the Web!

www.cecrock.com

Value Added Products: Maximize Yields, Maximize Profits

Sometimes what you are NOT adding is costing you money! We highly recommend you add an ammonium sulfate carrier with all of your glyphosate applications. AMS-SUPREME™ is a low cost, easy-to-use, conditioning blend of AMS, de-foaming agents, and deposition aid polymers for use with translocating herbicide performance. Containing 3.4 lbs. of ammonium sulfate per gallon, it helps uptake of glyphosate into the plant for improved weed control. We almost always use this product when spraying glyphosates, so why wouldn't you?

Manganese 5% has proven to increase yields and improve plant health in soybeans, dry beans and more. Add 1 quart /acre to glyphosate when spraying soybeans at a cost of less than 1/2

bushel of soybeans. We have had terrific results with this product and have done split applications to show the results. An ammonium sulfate source such as AMS Supreme should always be added with this product. For muck or sandy soils, use Max-In™ for Beans with 3.2% Mn, B, Fe, Mo, Zn.

Max-In™ for Alfalfa can be easily mixed with most crop protection products at 1 pint-2 quarts per acre. With Boron, Copper, Iron, Manganese, and Zinc it corrects key micronutrient deficiencies. Optimum application is at 4"-6" of growth, while the crop is actively growing. Applications after the first and last cuttings have shown good response. Though alfalfa trials have shown positive tonnage increases, the real value is improved feed quality.

Max-In™ ZMB is a new product for CEC. A nitrogen source with Zn, Mn, & B, add 1 quart to your glyphosate and AMS Supreme when spraying your Roundup® ready corn to improve plant health, growth and yields. This product has also been used successfully on potatoes and with peas when spraying Basagran® and Thistrol®.

Dupont™ Kocide® 3000 is an exciting new copper based formulation for use on young wheat. A single application applied with your nitrogen and Harmony® Extra will not only improve your yields, but also provide fungicide/bactericide protection for common wheat diseases. At a rate of 1/2—3/4 lb/acre, this product gives you a positive return on your investment. To read more go to kocide.dupont.com.

"There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by war, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbors. This is robbery. The second, by commerce, which is generally cheating. The third, by agriculture, the only honest way, wherein a man receives a real increase of the seed thrown in the ground, in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of God in his favor, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry" - Benjamin Franklin

Quality Cornmeal, Reliable Service: the backbone of CEC's cornmeal business

Cornmeal is an integral part of CE-Crocker's business. That is why we try to out-perform the competition and give our customers the best product possible.

We only buy from reputable growers, sample EVERY incoming load for moisture, test weight, visual appearance, odors, insects, and more. We produce a consistently fine grind and follow strict quality control standards. Our drivers are willing to "go the extra mile" to ensure your load arrives in a timely manner and put in storage as neat and orderly as possible.

If you like the security of dealing with an established company with a proven track record, then we're your match!

We also try to give "reminders" when we feel someone may run short going into a weekend or holiday— though we do make those emergency deliveries.

If you are currently a CEC cornmeal customer, *Thank You!* If your dairy

is not, call today and see what we have to offer.

We also buy corn year-round. If you have corn to mar-

ket, check us out. We offer fast, efficient unloading, prompt payment, and competitive pricing. If you like the security of dealing with an established company, with a proven track record, then we're your match!

What's New For 2008?

2008 promises to be another challenging year for everyone. We have seen plenty of ups and downs in every segment of agriculture in the past few years. CE-Crocker continues to make changes and investments that address these challenges and adapt to changing market conditions.

We have added another dry fertilizer bulk storage building to our Stafford location. The marketplace dictates that we need to be able to receive product year-round to ensure availability and we have been growing our storage capacity almost yearly. We are currently putting together another three hopper, ten wheeler delivery truck in our

shop, and just waiting on the arrival of the new tender body we ordered last fall.

We also installed a new phone system in our LeRoy office last fall. It has many more features, with the most beneficial being individual voice mailboxes. It has been a great help when the person you are calling is on another call or away from their desk—no more handwritten messages and the errors that come with them! Please leave a voice mail if we cannot be reached...we would much rather hear the message directly from you than take the chance of missing your call or any of the important information you are trying to convey. A live person will still answer incoming

calls during business hours. The voicemail option comes into play when the person you are calling is unavailable or when you call outside of office hours.

Also new this fall is the addition of Linda Risewick as Office Manager. You may recognize the name, as Linda has worked for other agricultural-related businesses such as Farm Credit and Upstate (Niagara) Milk Cooperatives. Linda resides in LeRoy with her husband, Mike, and their four sons. Welcome aboard, Linda!

