

Pro-Ag Update

BI-ANNUAL
NEWSLETTER

FALL 2005



Scholarship Winners are Announced

We have announced the winners of our 2005 scholarship program. The qualifications of our applicants were outstanding. After carefully reviewing each, we selected LeAnn Hall of Moweaqua, IL as our 4-year scholarship winner. Tracy Mellendorf of Dietrich, IL was awarded a special 2-year scholarship. See inside for details.

Nitrogen Study

The overuse of nitrogen fertilizer is costing farmers money and washing off the soil and polluting the state's waterways, an Iowa State University agronomy professor says.

Alfred Blackmer says using too much fertilizer will lead to lower on-farm income and bring with it government regulation of farmers' fertilizer use.

At a recent ag conference in Ames, Blackmer told farmers that they may no longer have as much freedom when it comes to fertilizer application.

"You're about to lose it," Blackmer told the several hundred farmers who were gathered to hear the most recent farm and livestock research

results from a state funded program that looks at nutrient management.

Most producers who participated in the trial could have reduced their nitrogen rates by 50 pounds an acre with no loss of profit, Blackmer said.

That's not true in all cases, he said, but all farmers can apply new technologies to decide what's the right amount of fertilizer for their fields. The technique is known as site-specific farming, it includes the use of Global Positioning Systems, yield monitors, aerial photographs and remote sensors.

Samples show the

amount of nitrogen in the soil and tests are taken to measure nitrogen in the growing corn plant — ways farmer can determine if they are using the right amount of nitrogen.

Doug Lindgren, who farms near Marathon, has participated in on-farm nitrogen trials. He has reduced nitrogen application from 150 pounds per acre to 125 pounds without losing yield.

Lindgren, who also works for the Iowa Soybean Association, said this year's on-farm tests showed that he can reduce his nitrogen use even more, to 75 pounds an acre.

"I've had zero loss of yield" at the lower rate, he said.

Now, Lindgren said, the challenge is going to be to spread the message through a core group of farmers who are building confidence that they can reduce their nitrogen use and help the environment while being more profitable."

*Farm Safety Involves
Everyone
Use Caution and Have
a Safe Harvest Season!*

Inside this issue:

Jim Koester Memorial Scholarship	2
2-Year Scholarship Winner	2
4-Year Scholarship Winner	3
Calculating Fertilizer Needs	4

Planning for Next Year

Many farmers have found that applying a soil penetrant on corn stalks in the fall of the year is generating many economical benefits.

Applying to corn stalks, increases the stalks decay, releasing nutrients back to the soil and greatly improves soil tilth. Seed beds are greatly improved and soils dry faster.

Continuing studies show yield increases of 5-8 bushel on beans, 8-13 bushel on corn and tillage costs reduced as much as 20%

If you are applying any fall chemicals the soil penetrant mixes easily. The distributor for Panhandler is Lewis Buettner.

His phone numbers are as follows: 1-800-426-9405 or 618-475-2571



The Jim Koester Memorial Scholarship



In 1995, Pro-Ag Consulting, LLC established a scholarship program for family members of its client base. The scholarship program is meant to help an interested student develop his or her learning skills so they too can enjoy the benefits of a career in agriculture. The details of the program are as follows:

Pro-Ag Consulting, LLC will award a \$2,000 agricultural scholarship in memory of Jim Koester of Watseka, IL. This scholarship will be awarded to a college bound high school senior




Jim Koester

whose parents or immediate family is a client of Pro-Ag. This scholarship will pay \$500 each year for 4 years to the college or university the recipient chooses to attend.

Jim's parents, Roy and Donna, and his grandparents, Adolph and Maria, agreed to our giving this scholarship in his name. Jim's picture and a plaque containing the recipient's names is on display in our office for you to see on your next visit to Pro-Ag's Windsor office.

Requirements and entry forms are available from our Windsor office/. Please contact us at 1-800-879-2297


 "To do a common thing
 uncommonly well brings
 Success"

Special Scholarship Awarded



*Tracy G. Mellendorf, 2-Year
 Jim Koester Memorial
 Scholarship winner*

This year we decided to award a special scholarship because of the quality of the applications. Tracy Mellendorf is the winner of our two year Jim Koester Memorial Scholarship.

Tracy will be a Junior at Southern Illinois University majoring in Agribusiness with a minor in crop and soil science. She completed her first two years at Lake Land College.

While attending high school in Dieterich, IL, Tracy was very active in school functions while maintaining a straight A average and graduated as Valedictorian of her class. Among her other honors were, high honors four years, national and state scholar, perfect attendance four years, who's who American awards and U.S. National math award.

"The best I may say on paper may not be a sufficient recommendation for Tracy," writes Bill Waggoner of Dieterich High School. "Three years



ago Tracy was a Senior at Dieterich Unit 30, very active in intercurricular activities, extracurricular activities, community activities and many more while still managing to keep her grades up to be valedictorian of her class. She served as Chapter FFA Secretary for over 80 students."

When asked what field of study will she pursue, she wrote "at Southern Illinois University I have chosen to major in Agribusiness economics and a minor in Plant & Soil Science. I chose my major because I enjoy both agriculture and math. This fall I will utilize both.

Tracy will graduate with the class of 2007. We want to extend to Tracy our very best wishes for much success in her chosen vocation.

2005 Scholarship Winner



*LeAnn Hall, Jim Koester
Scholarship Winner*

Growing up on a grain and livestock farm in Christian county Illinois, this young lady had an opportunity to be exposed to animals at a very young age. Working and taking care of them gave her the basis for what she wanted to do with her life. She will be a veterinarian.

LeAnn Hall of Moweaqua, Illinois is our 2005 winner of the Jim Koester Memorial Scholarship. She completed a straight A grade average all 4 years of High School. LeAnn is the daughter of Darrell and Melanie Hall and granddaughter of Marvin and Ester Gorden, all of Moweaqua, Illinois.

LeAnn will be attending Purdue University this fall majoring in Pre-Veterinary Medicine working for a Bachelor of Science in Animal Sciences. Purdue University has recognized her exceptional talents by awarding her, one of four incoming freshman, with a guaranteed entry into vet school. The only criteria considered is grade point averages. This is truly an exceptional accomplishment.

N. Duane Noland, Vice President of Hickory Point Bank, Decatur, IL said, "LeAnn has excelled in every area; academically, athletically and in extracurricular activities, including leadership positions in FFA, band, school and church youth groups.

Earning a straight A average throughout her high school career, she will be named valedictorian of her

graduating class at Central A & M high school. Her scholastic honors also include being a member of the first place team in the WYSE competition and the individual winner of the Biology competition.

Not only has LeAnn been active in numerous school and community activities, but she has consistently offered her leadership. She has served as Section 19 FFA vice president and as president, treasurer and voting delegate and attendee of state and national conventions for her local chapter. In sports, she has also been captain of the varsity softball and basketball teams, one year and three years respectively.

LeAnn's career goal is to be a large animal veterinarian, which has been cultivated by her involvement on the family grain and livestock farm. She has performed daily chores, prepared and shown sheep across the country. Their flock, Winning Ways Sheep Farm is one of the preeminent Oxford herds in North America."

Donna Caplinger, LeAnn's Science teacher adds, "She is interested in music, teaches piano, and is in a variety of musical groups in school, including marching band, pep band, concert band, as well as the All-Area Honor Band.

Science is LeAnn's area of specialty. I have had LeAnn in several science classes, and without fail, she is always the best student in the class. She competed in the regional WYSE contest three times during her high school years, and won first place as a junior.

Although LeAnn has always put so much effort into academics, she has always found time and energy to play sports. She was captain of the girls basketball team and her softball team. LeAnn is involved with programs through her church, and she is a member of the adult chime choir."

When LeAnn was asked "What do

you feel you do especially well?" she responded, "One of my attributes is my ability to set goals, work tirelessly to reach them, and be excited when I accomplish them. I live by the motto, "you'll always miss 100% of the shots you don't take," so I am not afraid to set my goals and expectations high and I expect to accomplish those goals in due time."

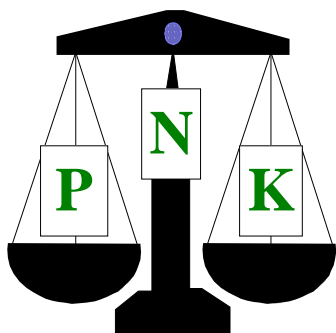
When asked "Why do you feel you should be awarded the scholarship?" LeAnn wrote, "I know I still have much to learn before I can make my dreams become reality. However, I have confidence that with the experiences that are yet to come, especially those from my college years, I will be prepared to be a successful adult. By awarding me this scholarship, you will be helping me to reach for the highest levels of success."

On behalf of the Jim Koester family and the employees of Pro-Ag Consulting, LLC, we would like to extend to her our sincerest best wishes for the educational path she has chosen to pursue. We know she will be very successful, and knowing her as a person, she will be an outstanding veterinarian.



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Calculating Fertilizer Needs



We are often asked, “if I apply 200#’s of DAP (18-46-0) why doesn’t my soil test go up to 92#’s,” even though the chemical analysis is 36-92-0 for 200#’s of DAP. The 92#’s of Phosphorus is not available to the plant or the soil test. Here are a couple examples of how Phosphorus and Potassium affect soil test.

Calculating Phosphate Fertilizer to Soil Test Results:

Phosphate Fertilizer is expressed in P_2O_5 form analysis.

Soil Test Results are expressed in P_1 form analysis.

The satisfactory level of Phosphate (as P_1) in the soil test is between 30 and 50 lbs. of P_1 . To convert values of P_2O_5 to P_1 , it generally takes 9 lbs. of P_2O_5 to raise the soil test of P_1 one pound. Therefore, a 100 lb. application of fertilizer containing 46 units or pounds of P_2O_5 (i.e. 0-46-0 or 18-46-0) will usually raise the soil test 5lbs. on the P_1 measurement (46 divided by 9 = 5). So, to raise a P_1 soil test from 35 lbs. to 50 lbs. would require $50-35 = 15$ divided by $5 = 300$ lbs. of 0-46-0.

Calculating Potash Fertilizer to Soil Test Results:

Potash Fertilizer is expressed in K_2O form analysis.

Soil Test Results are expressed in K form analysis.

The satisfactory levels of Potash are between 260 and 300 lbs./Acre. To convert values of K_2O to K, it generally takes 4 lbs. of K_2O to raise the soil test one pound. Therefore, a 100 lb. application of potash (0-0-60) will raise the soil test 15 lbs. (60 divided by 4 = 15). So, to raise the K test from 300 lbs. to 600 lbs. would require $(600 - 300 = 300)$ divided by $15 = 20$ 2000 lbs. of K_2O per acre.