

SEPTEMBER 2016

# CORN GUIDE

## STAYING AHEAD

TREVOR CUNNING SEEKS  
NEW PATHS TO BETTER FARM  
PERFORMANCE **PG. 3**

**GROWERS SECURE 40%  
OF NEW BIOCHEM  
INDUSTRY.....PG. 6**

**PHILIP SHAW: HOW TO  
TAME THE BEAR  
MARKET .....PG. 8**

**NEW HYBRID CHOICES  
FOR SPRING .....PG. 12**

**AFTER 2016, IT'S TIME  
TO RETHINK YOUR N  
STRATEGY .....PG. 17**





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# COMMITTED TO BETTER DECISIONS

Trevor Cunning tinkers,  
tweets and tightens his  
schedule to stay ahead

By Ralph Pearce,  
CG Production Editor

Go ahead, just ask him. Trevor Cunning will share almost anything he knows about farming and his farm. He even calls himself an “open book” and he says there’s little to hide about the family’s Starhill Farms operation in the Ottawa Valley, between Vankleek Hill and St-Eugène.

Cunning and his father Allen — who began farming in 1978 — work roughly 800 acres in a combination cash-cropping and dairying enterprise.

Between them, they know that there will be multiple challenges every year for every farmer. That’s just how it is. But Cunning also believes that for farmers today — and especially younger farmers — the challenges are different.

Challenges are coming in ways that this generation’s parents and grandparents rarely if ever had to deal with. And, he says, they’re coming fast.

**“I’m someone who likes to  
try different things.”**

**— Trevor Cunning**

Among them is growing consumer activism, especially in livestock production with today’s focus on animal welfare. But there are rising costs too, as well as other barriers to launching a farm career. And together, they are unlike anything that any other era has seen.

To counteract some of these pressures, Cunning believes in a time-honoured virtue — persistence. And he also believes in staying connected with other growers and like-minded individuals, and in being organized and focused on what he does best.

But he knows that in the end, the quality of their decisions is what will determine their success.

*Continued on page 4*



PHOTOGRAPHY: STEPHANE HUNTER • MASH PRODUCTIONS



“Be patient and try not to get too high or too low — keep an even keel.”

— Trevor Cuning

*Continued from page 3*

“I’m someone who likes to try different things,” says Cuning, explaining that from a cash-crop perspective, for instance, he’ll alter fertilizer applications or change up seed treatments or populations. “Last year, I tried a speed trial with my planter, just to see how it would work. We’re not people who let things come at us — we go out and try to do our own thing, and try not to fall in line with the way everyone else does things.”

When it comes to his questioning attitude, Cuning notes he often thinks of all the things his dad has done on their farm, like being one of the first producers in the region to switch to high-moisture corn, much to the surprise of others.

It helps explain why, in 2014, they purchased a self-propelled sprayer to apply their nitrogen in the spring, since they rely on their dairy manure for phosphorus and potassium. Yet wanting to follow new studies on splitting N applications, Trevor reasoned they needed something similar to a Y-drop system.

So he built his own.

“We go in in the spring and apply our nitrogen pre-plant using streamer nozzles, and we put enough on to get us to when the corn is just about to tassel,” says Cuning. “Then we go in and side-dress the rest with these drop-nozzles, which are from a kit from HJV. I modified it to drop down farther below the canopy, so now I can put nitrogen on corn that’s up to seven or eight feet tall. It has a ‘V’ on the bottom and it splits and goes right out to the root base of the plant.”

Thus far it has worked well, although they have picked up some bugs — literally — in the apparatus. But as with any do-it-yourself innovation, it isn’t a big surprise if it takes several times to learn how to tweak the design for maximum performance. That explains why Cuning worked on it this past winter, and modified it a little more in the spring.

Now he’s more confident. In fact, he also used the unit for some custom work for other growers this past spring, and was pleased to find they’ve been happy with the results.

## ROBOTICS AND ELEVATORS

Although they’re always looking to improve their on-farm efficiency, Cuning and his dad are treading a little carefully on robotic milking. They aren’t afraid to invest. In fact, for instance, they’ve built an elevator in order to give them more marketing flexibility while also growing the value of the farm.

Given the uncertainty of how consumer demands and the animal welfare lobby may change farming, however, the idea of automating their milking operation seems in a different category. With a relatively new tie-stall barn (built in 2009), they’ve been looking at implementing a robotic system, but they’re also concerned with the Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s proAction initiative and how that will affect livestock and dairy production going forward.

“We’re not sure of where everything’s going probably in the next 10 years — it’s hard to say with quota,” says Cuning, who adds that financial analysis will be key to any eventual move. “It’s like any kind of decision — weigh it, and re-weigh it and look at it again.”



that North America is roughly five to 10 years behind the trends in Europe, whether it's in equipment or technology or the dairy sector itself. Regardless, he suggests that those who are still in a tie-stall setup will either exit the industry in the next 10 years or they'll have to build another barn.

Yet Cuning says building the elevator for his farm was the best decision they could have made. It was a challenge getting it built and set up, but once in place, it saved him and his dad more stress than any other decision in the last 10 years.

"With your own elevator, you can go out and harvest five acres if you have to, and not worry about trying to line up an elevator somewhere else, and trucks, or not having to worry about someone being full or having to take corn or wheat or soybeans for a couple of days," says Cuning. "It was an investment, but the return on investment has been huge. The amount of stress it's saved us in the last two years has been incredible, especially last year with the volumes that were coming out of the field."

On-farm storage came into question about five years ago when engineers and retailers urged caution on farmer familiarity with the concept of storing grain. It's one thing to build a storage bin or an

value greatly. He can ask those questions about bugs or fans from within his dealer and company network.

Of course Twitter is also an incredible source of information and advice, and Cuning counts it among his most important resources.

"If you want to know what's happening in the country, you just pop open Twitter and everyone seems to want to share what's going on with them, or their crops or the weather," he says, adding that he converses primarily with farmers, dealers and manufacturers. "I probably use Twitter more than Facebook or Instagram or even YouTube."

## TOUGH TIMES

For all of Cuning's optimism and willingness to try, he concedes that one of the biggest challenges facing growers on the farm today is the dollar squeeze. Commodity prices are cyclically low, and that's the challenge for cash croppers. But the price for milk has been cut, fruit and vegetable growers are getting ratcheted down on their prices, and consumers are demanding greater accountability yet complaining about high prices for food.

"Everything is so tight, financially," Cuning says. "Every year it seems your expenditures go up but your income doesn't really increase much. And we've diversified our business as much as we can, getting into custom work and the cash-crop business and dairy. I'm happy we've done that because it eases the pressure on one single sector. But it's probably the biggest concern I've heard expressed by other growers — the amount of money left over."

"Guys are concerned about it," Cuning repeats. "There's less left over every year."

To answer that, Cuning and his dad are always trying to stay ahead by following a fairly rigid schedule that helps organize each day and each week's tasks. For Trevor, it's a matter of getting everything lined up and planning everything out as best he can, and to live by the mantra "control the controllable." He also tries to stay up-to-date with news and trends in the agri-food industry, and he's never satisfied with the "just enough" mindset.

"Be persistent, keep your ears open, talk to lots of people and take every opportunity that you get to make connections," Cuning says. "And be patient and try not to get too high or too low — keep an even keel." **CG**



For father Allen and Trevor Cuning, building their own elevator has boosted their operational flexibility and greatly reduced stress.

The animal welfare and consumer interest in farming is raising considerable stress in the farming community, making it difficult to predict just how some of these issues are going to affect the agri-food sector, particularly livestock and poultry. Cuning adds that he looks at the European situation and where producers there are heading. He also believes

elevator, but the liability for anything happening to that stored product then falls on the farmer. Knowing when to turn on the fan or to check for bugs — all of that and more — suddenly became the domain of the farmer. Cuning says he's lucky that since he works with DuPont Pioneer as a seed dealer, he has access to resources that he's come to

# From cornstalks to sugar

Farmers ready to participate in bioeconomy

By Helen Lammers-Helps

With consumers pushing for a greener, more sustainable chemical industry, agriculture is poised to play a key role in the new bioeconomy, especially with renewable resources that can be converted into bioenergy and biobased chemicals.

This time, farmers aren't waiting around to find out how they can get involved.

A group of farmers in southwestern Ontario is getting in on the ground floor of a commercial-scale facility at Sarnia, Ont. that will convert corn stover into cellulosic sugar, which can then be used to make plastics, lubricants, paints and other bio-based products.

The new facility, to be operated by Comet Biorefining, is a win-win for farmers. That's according to Dave Park, a Sarnia-area grower who is a director with the Grain Farmers of Ontario and president of the Cellulosic Sugar Producers Co-operative, formed two years ago to collaborate on the development of a sustainable agricultural biomass supply chain.

Creating a market for cornstalks will benefit farmers in two ways, says Park.

The first is agronomic. Corn stover has become a management challenge for farmers, especially with the bigger, tougher plants produced by today's high-yield corn crops. Many farmers now find that because of the amount of crop residue after corn, it is difficult to get a good stand of soybeans the following year.

Farmers are having to use more tillage to manage the crop residue, says Park, but removing a portion of the corn stover from the field would make it easier for farmers to plant a subsequent crop and eliminate the need for extra tillage.

The second reason is business. Selling the corn crop residue would be an opportunity to boost income from the farm



The co-op is looking for up to 150 growers within 100 kms of Sarnia.

The farm co-op will own a 40 per cent share of the biorefinery, and assure farmers a place at the table

without having to increase the land base, Park says.

The Cellulosic Sugar Producers Co-operative will be responsible for removing the corn crop residue, aggregating it at a central location and delivering it to the conveyor belt at the biomass plant, says Park.

Farmers would combine their corn crop as usual, with Park envisioning a two-pass system for the removal of the corn stover. First, a flail chopper would be used to cut the cornstalks. The chopper would be set high in order to leave 50 per cent of the crop residue in the field to maintain soil organic matter levels, he explains.

The second pass would be with the baler, after which bales will be stacked at the edge of the field until they can be transported to a central aggregation site.

The co-operative will ensure the bales are removed from the field by March 30 of the following year, and bale weights and moisture levels will be recorded at the central aggregation facility.

All of the farmers supplying corn crop residue will need to be members of the co-operative. This ensures that a consistent product is delivered to the conveyor belt and also gives farmers a voice at the table, says Park.

The co-operative will own a 40 per

cent stake in the biorefinery, which means farmer members will also get "a portion of the value of the sugar coming out the other end," says Park.

The new cellulosic sugar plant is the culmination of several years' work by several players, including farmers, industry, and government, who have been trying to advance green technology and the bioeconomy.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) has been working on biomass issues for several years, says OFA president Don McCabe. McCabe farms in Sarnia-Lambton, near the proposed plant site and is also vice-chair of the Bio-industrial Innovation Centre (BIC), a non-profit group which aims to bridge the gap between research and the commercial application of green technologies.

"You have to get everything moving in the same direction," says McCabe. "Farmers aren't going to take off the stover without a market but the company won't come unless farmers are taking off the feedstock." While some say it's the proverbial "chicken and egg" situation, McCabe prefers the analogy "the same tide will raise all boats."

In 2013, the OFA hired the University of Guelph (Ridgetown Campus) to investigate the potential for a commer-

cial-scale biorefinery. The report, called “Development of a Business Case for Cornstalks to Bioprocessing Venture” is available on the OFA website along with other studies completed by the OFA. Focus group meetings with producers were held as part of the investigation to determine producer interest and concerns. The analysis also considered four possible business models, and it then determined that a supply co-op where all entities of the value-chain could potentially be equity members was the preferred model.

OFA’s research indicated that problems with high levels of corn crop residue occur at yields above 150 bushels per acre, says McCabe. Soils will warm up faster with the excess corn stover removed but farmers will need to be compensated for the nutrients that are leaving the field, he adds.

OFA also organized corn stover baling demonstrations which were attended by about 1,000 farmers. McCabe says this work showed that the AGCO large square baler is capable of handling cornstalks in addition to wheat straw and hay.

Sarnia, which has been a petrochemical industry hub for more than 70 years, is a good location for the bioprocessing plant, says McCabe. Industrial land with

all of the necessary infrastructure services is available as well as a skilled workforce. “And the feedstock is available just one concession over.”

Park and several other local farmers got involved about two years ago. BIC brought all of the players together, including farmers, government, end-users and technology providers. “It seemed to be a worthwhile project so we formed a co-operative,” says Park. “That meeting seemed to create traction... the ball gained momentum.” He adds: “We’ve been passing all of the check-points ever since.”

“It’s good for farmers to be involved to steer the way the industry goes. We’re taking an active role in adding value to undervalued corn crop residue,” says Park.

BIC evaluated the various companies that had the technology to convert biomass into sugar. They started with 19 potential companies and during a process that took a year and a half, whittled the field down to a handful. At this point they let the farmer co-operative choose the successful company. “We let the co-op have the final say since it would be working with them,” says Dr. Murray McLaughlin, an adviser at BIC and the former executive director.

One of the reasons the co-op chose Comet Biorefining is that its proposal was not a megaplant, but it is scalable. “We have to walk before we can run. We don’t want to get too big too fast,” says Park.

The co-op also liked that Comet Biorefining can use more than one feedstock, continues Park. If there are problems, such as a heavy rain or early snow that makes it difficult to remove the stover, the plant could run on wheat straw or wood chips instead, although Park hopes it will be running on 100 per cent corn stover. “We want to build up a surplus inventory in the event of poor weather,” he says.

The Cellulosic Sugar Producers Co-operative will be holding information meetings this fall in order to complete its Equity Raise Campaign.

“We’ll show what work’s been done, but it will be up to each farmer to decide if it’s a fit,” says Park, who adds that they are hoping to attract about 100 to 150 members within a 100-km radius of the Sarnia plant.

McLaughlin expects agriculture will see even more diversification opportunities in the bioeconomy. “It could be selling crop residue or it could be purpose-grown crops such as Miscanthus or switchgrass.” **CG**

## RESOURCES

“Development of a Business Case for Cornstalks to Bioprocessing Venture” report by the University of Guelph (Ridgetown) is at: [www.ofa.on.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/CornstalkReport-FINAL.pdf](http://www.ofa.on.ca/uploads/userfiles/files/CornstalkReport-FINAL.pdf)



# TAME THE BEAR

We're back to the corn prices we saw before the great ethanol boom, but weather is always a wild card



By Philip Shaw

The 2016 growing season in the United States has been excellent for corn production, and it's making distant memories of the 2012 drought that reduced U.S. corn yields and sent prices into the stratosphere.

Such a severe drought doesn't happen very often. At that time it drove corn futures to an all-time high of \$8.49 a bushel, which not surprisingly then made the whole world want to grow corn, and which in turn is why prices have slid the long way down ever since.

But market demand is its own story. For instance, this year the USDA is projecting corn demand to be 14.5 billion bushels. This is huge especially considering that last year at the same time corn use in the United States was lower than this by 500 million bushels.

The world still wants corn, especially at lower prices. It is almost like a challenge of abundance. Good weather and improved genetics and crop management produce ever bigger corn crops.

However, that abundance usually comes with lower prices and bigger surpluses. At mid-July 2016 the old-crop corn stocks-to-use ratio was still sitting at 14.7 per cent, compared to last year's 12.4 per cent.

Strong corn production in the U.S. is the key to sustaining these markets.

Getting here has been an adventure, however, and it has taken the better part of eight years since that first run-up in corn futures prices to the \$8 level.

Before 2008, U.S. corn farmers were given the challenge to produce corn for ethanol to satisfy the renewable fuel standards (RFS) brought in under the U.S. Energy Act. At the time this meant that

corn production would need to climb significantly in order to satisfy this demand. As prices went up because of increased ethanol demand, the 2012 drought added to the corn price effervescence.

Today's ethanol demand for corn in the United States is 5.275 billion bushels, but production has risen over time to feed this demand, and we are now back to futures prices similar to those before the great ethanol boom erupted.

The implications for corn producers especially in Eastern Canada are telling. Over the last eight years, corn prices have been significantly higher than the \$3.30s we saw in August. Many younger producers have become used to those prices.

At the same time, corn productivity has shown healthy annual gains partly based on improved genetics and management techniques. This has led to higher profits than usual in the corn market.

Now, in 2016 it looks like those days are over.

Big production in the U.S. has been the biggest reason for the lower futures prices. On August 12, 2016, the USDA released its corn estimate of 15.153 billion bushels, up significantly from its estimate of 2015 at the same time of 13.6 billion bushels. Even with the huge demand figure of 14.5 billion bushels, U.S. ending stocks are expecting to come in at 2.4 billion bushels. These huge supply numbers have swamped the corn market.

Clearly, it is what it is, but for producers with corn there is hope. Markets are cyclical and the corn futures market is

legendary for its gyrations. The U.S. corn yield projection from USDA is 175.1 bushels per acre going into the September USDA report.

Any change in U.S. yield projections will have an impact on prices. The Brazilian crop was down 10 per cent in 2016, meaning Brazil will import U.S. corn for their poultry sector.

Interestingly enough, change may come from North American production in 2017 with the possible formation of a La Niña weather pattern and unfriendly crop conditions. Although, this might be a factor for prices in 2017, some of it will surely catch some of the 2016 old crop.

Weather is always a wild card, and this surely will continue.

In Eastern Canada the saving grace for Ontario and Quebec cash prices has been the value of the Canadian dollar as of August 2016 valued at approximately US\$0.7680. This has been extremely important to cash price, although in some ways, it's a bit of a price illusion as low corn futures prices in the \$3 to \$4 range translate into Canadian cash prices of \$4 to \$5 a bushel. As the Canadian dollar gyrates, so too does the cash price.

The Canadian dollar is a thinly traded currency compared to the U.S. dollar. As the U.S. dollar moves, usually the Canadian dollar moves in the opposite direction. Global instability usually means strength in the U.S. dollar and acts as a drag to agricultural commodity demand.

Brexit's continuing instability should

support the U.S. dollar, and future moves by the U.S. Federal Reserve to possibly raise interest rates would support it too. This will continually give clues on the direction to the Canadian dollar and basis levels.

The Canadian dollar affects basis levels for corn, but the eastern basis is also influenced by the quality and quantity of corn supplies within Ontario and Quebec. In 2016, the crop size is still being measured, but it will clearly be significantly less than the 170 bushels per acre recorded in Ontario in 2015. In fact, Ontario has been importing corn in the summer of 2016 and if drought conditions continue in many parts of the province, an import basis may become much more common.

In other words, expect higher basis levels than the past few years for Ontario corn. Drought does have its price, and for many regions of Ontario in 2016, the corn crop is paying that price.

This will be very challenging to Canadian corn farmers. In August 2015, the Canadian dollar was valued at approximately US\$0.91. In August 2016, it is approximately US\$0.7680. That movement in the Canadian dollar during late 2015 was the whole story with regard to pricing cash corn during that period. This is always the inconvenient truth of pricing corn in Canada. Futures prices move and do what they do, but when you have a precipitous drop in the value of the Canadian dollar like we saw last fall, sometimes that

is the key factor to pricing Canadian grain. It is really nothing new, but going into the harvest of 2016 foreign exchange is likely to remain very important.

The market reality in August 2016 for corn is bearish, but keep in mind that the market is very fluid.

Nothing ever remains the same, especially when it comes to corn futures prices and the corn market.

It also may mean, the bottom is yet to be found. Much will depend on the U.S. dollar value going forward as well as how South America adapts to changing corn prices. With the Brazil crop size down this year, will they plant more next year? Argentina is expected to plant more corn in the fall as the new government has changed the schedule of export taxes on commodities.

No discussion about the corn market is ever complete without talking about ethanol. In the U.S., ethanol demand is the highest ever, but much will depend on the outcome of the U.S. presidential election. A different president may have a different opinion about continuing the ethanol mandate.

In Ontario, subsidies from the Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund come to an end on December 31, 2016. The administrative end of the program comes at the end of March 2017. Ontario's ethanol refiners will have to find their way forward.

It is a low-price corn scenario, which we've seen before. However, change is our only constant in agriculture. Combines are yet to roll and late-summer weather could still change the U.S. yields.

USDA reports will surely continue to serve as flashpoints for price volatility. The challenge for eastern Canadian corn growers will be to market where they are profitable and comfortable. There will be corn-marketing opportunities ahead. Daily market intelligence in both the cash and futures market will be key. **CG**

**Heading into harvest, it's easy to see all the reasons why the bear market could dominate our winter. But the market is fluid. Nothing ever stays the same forever, especially in corn**



**Here's to farmers.**

*The ones whose DNA runs in rows,  
the ones who value pinky swears as much as handshakes,  
and the ones who never wanted to be anything but.*

*Here's to farmers.*

*The ones who don't believe in man's work,  
the ones who've never heard of an 8-hour workday,  
and the ones who don't believe the week ends.*

*Here's to farmers.*

*The ones who stand as tall as their fields,  
wipe the dedication from their brow,  
and whose hearts span beyond their acreage.*

*Here's to farmers who never stop growing.*



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# What's new in corn hybrids

More hybrids, more technologies, more choices for 2017

By Ralph Pearce, CG Production Editor

**C**orn has become the go-to crop for even more farms across Canada, despite the fact that it already has over a century of history north of the border. In fact, despite this year's pricing worries and all the talk of a potential oversupply in the market, it's a choice that more growers seem ready to be loyal to.

When a farm opts for corn, it isn't just choosing a crop to grow. It's choosing a way to structure and grow the farm itself. It's choosing a future.

In this second edition of our "What's new in corn hybrids," we offer a quick summary of the latest hybrids and technologies coming available to growers. In

all, 10 seed and trait companies are participating in this year's edition, with more than 60 new hybrids.

Some differentiate their listings between grain and silage hybrids. Others are featuring their companies' latest technologies. We have tried to create the most value for you from the information they felt able to share.

As always, we strive to make this list as comprehensive as possible, but it's still important to discuss your seed and planting decisions with your dealer or seed company representative.

Also take note of the following abbreviations: CHU means corn heat units; RM is relative maturity. In

## COUNTRY FARM SEEDS

### GRAIN HYBRIDS

CF 190 is a conventional hybrid, suited to regions with 2400 CHU including Ontario's near north.

CF192 is a Roundup Ready 2 technology hybrid and is also bred for the 2400 CHU region.

CF430 is a conventional hybrid with suitability for 2825 CHU regions.

CF458 features Genuity SmartStax RIB Complete technology, and is bred for areas with 2875 CHUs.

### SILAGE HYBRIDS

CF978S is an advanced technology hybrid with the Agrisure GT system. It performs best in areas with 2200 CHU.

CF990S is a Roundup Ready 2 technology silage hybrid, suited for dairy production in 2775 CHU regions.

CF994S features Genuity SmartStax RIB Complete technology. It is bred specifically for silage producers in the 2850 CHU area.

## CROPLAN

1756VT2P/RIB is an early, fixed-ear type suited for medium to high stand populations in 2350 CHU regions. 1756VT2P/RIB flowers in the mid-range of the maturity set for good quality grain. It is a medium-height plant with very good stalk strength and a 77 RM.

2587VT2P/RIB is able to perform consistently across varying soil types in the 2625 CHU area. It features plant health for late-season intactness, and the hybrid has excellent drydown characteristics and an 85 RM. Preliminary data show excellent stress capability.

314VT2P/RIB is similar to 3146 and 2845 in maturity, with strong emergence and late-season intactness. Suited for 2750 CHU region and a 93 RM.

3614VT2P/RIB is a potential pair for 3899, with superior stalk strength and disease tolerance. Best suited to 2850 CHU with a 96 RM.

3705VT2P/RIB and 3705SS/RIB have been selected for top production of high test-weight grain combined with early

flowering and the capacity to travel beyond their heat unit ranges (2850 and 2875 CHU, respectively). Both have strong plant health for late-season intactness, with an aggressive root structure and a 97 RM.

4350SS/RIB is an aggressive hybrid from seedling onwards and an impressive performer, with early flowering in its maturity class (103 RM). This hybrid responds to management in the 3100 CHU regions.

4791AS3111/GT and 4791AS3000/GT have the capacity to produce large plants that handle stress well and respond to high-yield situations. Both are noted for root and stalk strength and are best suited to 3200 CHU with a relative maturity of 107.

S4100VT3P/RIB is a leafy silage hybrid, with excellent emergence and early growth vigour. A longer harvest window in the 3000 CHU region ensures potential feed quality. Like most leafy products, it yields best at moderate populations with a relative maturity of 101.

## DEKALB/MONSANTO

DKC34-57RIB is a VT Double PRO RIB Complete hybrid that has demonstrated excellent yield potential and high test weight in all yield environments. It performs best on loamy soils and has very good drydown and stalk strength.

DKC35-88RIB has shown excellent yield potential in all soil types and yield environments. This VT Double PRO RIB Complete hybrid flowers and dries down true to its relative maturity and has excellent stalks and roots.

DKC38-55RIB is a hybrid that performs best on loamy soils at medium to high planting populations. It is a medium-statured VT Double PRO RIB Complete hybrid that flowers early for its relative maturity and has excellent drydown and very good test weight.

DKC40-77RIB is a stable performing hybrid with good yield potential. This SmartStax RIB Complete hybrid has a very good overall defensive disease package to make for excellent seedling vigour all the way through to excellent late-season plant health.

DKC53-72RIB is a widely adapted SmartStax RIB Complete hybrid with strong agronomics and yield potential across all yield environments.

DKC55-05RIB is a VT Double PRO RIB Complete hybrid with strong yield potential and excellent stalk strength. Plant this hybrid at medium to high populations for best results.

DKC58-06RIB is a SmartStax RIB Complete hybrid with excellent agronomics and yield potential. It performs well across all soil types. This hybrid has excellent seedling vigour and emergence and should be planted at higher populations for best results

## DOW SEEDS

### GRAIN CORN

DS84J77RA – This exciting high-yielding 2600 CHU hybrid features new SmartStax genetics and Refuge Advanced technology. Strong agronomics and drought tolerance combined with great stalks and roots make DS84J77RA an excellent choice for any farm. The large robust semi-flex ear has great tip fill and contains deep flat kernels. Open husk at maturity promotes rapid grain drydown.

DS01D87RA – This new 3050 CHU SmartStax hybrid is strong season-long thanks to strong agronomics. Excellent disease tolerance to northern corn leaf blight and eyespot keep DS01D87RA healthy throughout the growing season allowing for great late-season plant intactness. This hybrid delivers consistent performance over variable growing conditions and has the ability to outperform in high yield environments.

DS02J57RA – This 3100 CHU SmartStax hybrid combines excellent general stress tolerance with strong yield potential and is widely adapted to offer stable performance under tough conditions. It features strong early-season emergence and vigour and is well adapted to no-till management. DS02J57RA is an excellent choice for soil types susceptible to drought stress. The semi-flex ear with excellent husk coverage also favours use in areas prone to bird damage.

### SILAGE CORN

BMR90B94 – This 2600 BMR (brown mid-rib) hybrid is Dow's earliest BMR silage-specific hybrid and features Herculex Xtra insect protection and Roundup Ready 2 Technology. Solid agronomics support high plant densities, good stress tolerance and excellent standability. BMR90B94 provides dairy producers in early season production areas the opportunity to utilize highly digestible corn silage with BMR technology.

F2F345RA – This 2700 CHU BMR hybrid features the SmartStax trait package combined with Refuge Advanced technology. This highly digestible silage-

specific hybrid is medium-tall in height with good stress tolerance and great forage tonnage potential. It has a harder kernel texture which will benefit from kernel processing, and features good ear development and tip fill.

BMR97B37RA – This high-yielding 2850 CHU BMR silage-specific SmartStax hybrid has a tall attractive plant stature, solid agronomics including above average eyespot and northern corn leaf blight tolerance and delivers excellent forage tonnage. BMR97B37RA produces exceptional BMR quality silage with high starch scores and unmatched BMR digestibility.

TMF99Q47RA – This high-yielding 3000 CHU SmartStax corn silage hybrid comes from a new line of Dow Seeds TMF silage genetics. TMF99Q47RA is a tall attractive hybrid with a dense canopy, solid agronomics and consistent ear size with moderately soft kernel texture all contributing to excellent whole plant digestibility and starch scores.

TMF03H27RA – This new 3100 CHU SmartStax silage specific hybrid features a tall, dense plant stature and delivers impressive forage yield. TMF03H27RA has solid agronomics including strong stalks, excellent ear retention and leaf disease tolerance. Large ears produce grain with soft kernel texture contributing to high starch scores and easy processing.

## DUPONT PIONEER

P9188 is a new conventional version of leader genetics for maturity in the 2650 heat unit area, with a high yield performance with early flowering. Excellent root and stalk strength, and superb test weight.

P0157AMXT is a new technology version of leader genetics for maturity, featuring two modes of insect protection above ground and two modes below ground. A 3050 CHU hybrid, it flowers late with very fast drydown. An Optimum AQUAmax product for exceptional drought tolerance and a short plant with low ear insertion and high test weight. Very good root strength and average stalk strength.

P0506 is a conventional hybrid with excellent performance for 3100 CHU. It also has above-average stalk strength, intermediate stress emergence and exceptional drought tolerance with the Optimum AQUAmax trait. Very good

*Continued on page 14*

grain drydown and an excellent disease resistance package.

P0825AM is another new full-season product with single-bag integrated refuge. This 3250 CHU hybrid has above-average stalk strength, very good drought tolerance and exceptional staygreen properties. Also boasts a great disease resistance package including above-average northern leaf blight tolerance and moderate Gibberella ear rot tolerance.

P0825AMXT is a new full-season product with great yield potential. It has two modes of insect protection above ground and two modes below ground, plus above-average stalk strength. A 3300 CHU hybrid, it has very good drought tolerance, exceptional staygreen and a great disease resistance package including above-average northern leaf blight tolerance and moderate Gibberella ear rot tolerance.

### ELITE SEEDS

E53G52 R (2550 CHU) is a stable hybrid with high yield potential across all soils and environments. It is a versatile hybrid with a late flowering, very fast drydown, high test weight and good grain quality. It offers a very good stalk and root strength and excellent seedling vigour. It represents an excellent companion product to E53B22 R. It is offered as Genuity VT Double Pro RIB Complete.

E55G55 (2600 CHU) is the new conventional hybrid for non-GMO market. It adds another option to Elite's conventional high-yielding hybrids with E61C35 (2725 CHU) and E71T15 (2975 CHU) already on the market. It offers excellent spring vigour with a very high yield potential and good staygreen, plus impressive performance in high- and low-yield environments. This hybrid has fast drydown, high test weight and excellent grain quality. With its high plant height, it is well suited for silage use and offers good silage quality.

E63G62 R (2750 CHU) provides solid agronomic features like spring vigour, high test weight and very good stalk strength. It offers very good yield potential even in lower-yielding environments and performs well under stress. It has excellent staygreen and a nice harvest appearance. It comes with the Genuity VT Double Pro RIB Complete trait and does very well in silage.

E65G82 R (2850 CHU) offers outstanding yield potential with good stalks and roots. This hybrid responds very well

to intensive management and is best suited to better soils. It comes with the Genuity VT Double Pro RIB Complete trait.

E69G92 R (2950 CHU) is a new high-yielding hybrid that offers a good stress tolerance. It is well adapted to all kinds of soils and will perform very well in all yield environments. It has an excellent stalk and root strength, and very good test weight. It comes with the Genuity VT Double Pro RIB Complete trait and does very well in silage.

E70G30 LR (3000 CHU) is a new hybrid that was offered in limited quantities in 2016 and will be more broadly available for 2017 season. It offers exceptional yield potential, especially in high-yielding environments. This is a high plant hybrid with very good staygreen, leaf disease tolerance and stalk strength. Its spring vigour is excellent. This hybrid comes with the Genuity SmartStax RIB complete trait.

Logan HD-R (2700 to 3000 CHU) is a new silage-specific hybrid. It is a leafy hybrid with the Roundup Ready trait. It has very good spring vigour and is late-flowering. This hybrid has been selected for its plant height and number of leaves above the cob which give very high silage yield and high NDF digestibility. The grain has slow drydown allowing a longer harvest window. Overall, 25 per cent of the kernels are floury, which gives high starch digestibility. This hybrid has flex-type ears and the recommended seeding rate is 28,000 to 32,000 seeds per acre.

### HORIZON SEEDS

HZ 2852 (3010 CHU) and HZ 2853 (3220 CHU) are 88 RM hybrids for the early markets in Ontario. These hybrids give excellent test weight increasing the weight of your corn shipped to the elevator, thus increasing profit margins. This hybrid has excellent stalks and roots with good plant health and excellent agronomics. HZ 2852 has corn borer control while HZ 2853 has added lepidopteran insect control and is E-Z Refuge (refuge blended in bag).

HZ 3790GT is a glyphosate-tolerant only 97 RM hybrid giving growers options in trait platforms. This hybrid has excellent top-end yield punch with excellent plant health. If there are swing acres for silage or grain harvest, this is an excellent dual-purpose hybrid, especially with corn-on-corn rotations when acres become tight.

HZ 4010 – 3220 is an E-Z Refuge hybrid at 100 RM with Agrisure Artesian



drought technology. Even in moisture-stressed soils this hybrid will rise to the top. HZ 4010 has solid agronomics and a short-statured plant with good roots giving it a nice stand during harvest. With dual modes of action for both corn borer and lepidopteran insects, this hybrid has strong yield potential.

HZ 4311 – 3011 is a new 103 RM hybrid for the silage-specific market. For corn-on-corn acres, there is control to both corn borer and corn rootworm. Excellent silage tonnage yield the silage bunker will be filled with fewer acres. HZ 4311 has excellent spring seed vigour for quick emergence.

### MAIZEX SEEDS

MZ 2495DBR (2500 CHU/84 RM) VT Double Pro provides rapid grain drydown combined with leading test weight, along with excellent spring vigour and uniform ear size to maintain yield under tough soil conditions. Plants mature quickly but with excellent stalk integrity. Positioned in and north of its maturity zone, and responds favourably to foliar fungicides and higher populations.

MZ 305X (2750 CHU/90 RM) Conventional offers exceptional plant health and staygreen that leads to high yield potential, plus above-average seedling vigour. It performs well in stressful environments, maintaining ear size. It is also positioned in and north of zone for opti-



imum performance at medium to higher populations.

MZ 3033DBR (2750 CHU/90 RM) VT Double Pro provides outstanding stress tolerance and late-season intactness. Strong early-season vigour with leading plant health and staygreen characteristics through grain fill leads to large blocky ears with 18 to 20 rows of deep kernels. It maintains ear size under variable environments and is positioned in and north of maturity zone under moderate to higher populations. Adapted to variable soil types and yield expectations.

MZ 3216DBR (2800 CHU/92 RM) VT Double Pro is an excellent dual-purpose hybrid for high grain yields or silage with exceptional starch quantity and starch availability. Plants have taller plant height with good, large-girthed ears. Positioned in and north of adapted maturity zone at moderate plant populations and responds well to foliar fungicides and higher nitrogen application rates.

MZ 3410DBR (2850 CHU/94 RM) VT Double Pro offers strong stalks and solid plant health that leads to high yield potential. Plants flower early for maturity, with impressive fall intactness and excellent staygreen. Positioned in its adapted maturity zone for optimum performance using moderate seeding rates, it demonstrates strong defensive traits to preserve yield under variable yield environments.

MZ 4280DBR (3050 CHU/102 RM)

VT Double Pro has industry-leading potential from start to finish to increase your yield. Strong seedling vigour responds positively to increased fertility plus solid agronomics combined with exceptional plant health. Shorter plant stature and exceptional late-season intactness aids harvest. It also has consistent ear size in variable environments and is positioned in and south of its maturity zone under moderate plant populations.

MZ 4343DBR (3100 CHU/103 RM) VT Double Pro provides leading agronomics combined with exceptional grain quality and yield potential. It comes with excellent plant health and stalk strength and husks dry quickly to aid in rapid grain drydown. Positioned in and south of maturity zone at moderate to higher populations for optimum performance.

### PRIDE SEEDS

A4199G2 RIB/A4099RR is a new PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete at 2150 CHU and Roundup Ready 2 at 2125 CHU for grain usage. It features early pollination and finish, with nice grain quality and consistency. Also offers rapid emergence and aggressive seedling vigour for a fast, early season start, with very quick grain drydown in the fall.

A5432G2 RIB is an impressive benchmark product family. It's now available as PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete, delivering above-ground insect control at 2650 CHU. Very high performance with exceptional yield potential, it also has great drought and stress tolerance. It's flexible as a dual-purpose grain/silage usage with early flowering with very strong late-season intactness and stalk strength.

A5656 is a new exciting introductory Conventional hybrid at 2675 CHU and an excellent choice for dual-purpose grain or silage usage, with long-lasting health and outstanding stalk strength. It has a visually attractive plant stature and outstanding plant and ear uniformity with outstanding performance, consistency and reliability.

A5914G2 RIB/A5915G8 RIB is a new hybrid family available as PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete rated at 2700 CHU or PRIDE G8 SmartStax RIB Complete hybrid rated at 2725 CHU for a choice of above- or below-ground insect control. It features girthy ears and solid agronomics. Provides outstanding yields with excellent stalks, roots and excellent stress tolerance.

A6848G2 RIB is another new PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete rated

at 2900 CHU delivering above-ground insect control. It has a highly consistent yield potential with excellent stress tolerance and leaf disease resistance, plus medium plant height with upright leaf stature. It also features top-end grain quality and very uniform ear size.

A6888G2 RIB is a new, highly impressive PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete hybrid rated at 2925 CHU and delivering above-ground insect control. It features exceptional high-end yield potential with great commercial look. Also has excellent stress tolerance and leaf disease resistance and can be used as a dual grain or silage choice.

A7171G2 RIB is a new premium choice PRIDE G2 VT Double PRO RIB Complete rated at 3050 CHU for above-ground insect control. It also comes with high-end yield potential with excellent stress tolerance and leaf disease resistance, plus strong emergence and vigour. It can be used as a dual grain or silage choice with a great potential to be a dominant product in this maturity range.

A7790G8 RIB/A7707 is another new, big impact PRIDE G8 SmartStax RIB Complete rated at 3250 CHU or Conventional hybrid choice rated at 3200 CHU. It gives a choice for above- and below-ground insect control or non-traited. Exceptionally consistent high top-end yield potential across soil types and excellent grain quality and outstanding test weight. It grows long, consistent ears with eye-catching good looks.

### SYNGENTA

N07S is a 2300 CHU NK corn hybrid new for 2017 that provides consistently strong yield performance across a broad range of growing environments and conditions. This hybrid's excellent seedling vigour helps it emerge strong and produce dependable stalks and roots for a high test weight and easy harvest. N07S includes the Agrisure 3010 trait that helps deliver season-long protection from European corn borer, with glyphosate and glufosinate tolerance.

N08L is a new NK corn hybrid broadly adapted to be a strong yield performer across several geographies and soil types. At 2350 CHUs, this hybrid offers very good emergence and early-season vigour and produces a heavy test weight with good grain quality. N08L also demonstrates strong drought tolerance. This hybrid includes the Agrisure Viptera 3110 trait stack for excellent control and protection against above-ground insects. **CG**

# Brexit — good or bad for us?

While the ag sector looks for stability in currency markets, short-term price spikes and long-term trade agreements may get overlooked

By Angela Lovell

Financial markets began to stabilize within days of the U.K.'s surprise Brexit vote this past June, but that doesn't mean the vote has been shrugged off either by the big exchanges or by the markets that set the prices for farm commodities.

It does mean, however, that the world is coming to terms with the fact that there won't be a lot of quick answers.

For Canadian farmers, it adds up to more uncertainty, and more volatility.

Not only is there a risk of financial instability, but there may also be fallout from the trade deals that get opened up as part of the Brexit process.

"There's going to be a lot of negotiation," says Eric Olson, farm management consultant with MNP in Winnipeg. "The U.K. is a big economy that Europe still wants to trade with, so I don't think they're going to exactly leave them out in the cold. But again they're not going to make it an easy exit."

Agriculture isn't likely to be front and centre in those negotiations, but it can still be affected.

"I would expect in the short term that we're going to be faced with a bit of volatility at a time that is important for Canadian producers," agrees J.P. Gervais, chief economist with Farm Credit Canada.

Olson believes the immediate impact will be from currency volatility: "Most of our commodities are priced off the U.S. market and the U.S. dollar... the Canadian dollar has moved up against the euro and sterling and we've moved down against the U.S. dollar. So in the short term, Canadian exporters have a bit of a competitive advantage against the U.S. because of the low Canadian dollar."

Over the longer term, however, red meat, grains and oilseeds can feel the impact of a shift in currency values. "We rely so much on the strength of export

markets to not only sell commodities but also price commodities," says Gervais. "One of the things that we forget sometimes is that we don't need to export commodities to actually feel the impact. As an example, should China's economic growth slow down because of the turmoil in the world economy due to Brexit, we don't even have to export to China to feel some of that because the strength of demand coming out of China does have an impact on commodity prices that are paid to Canadian producers."

Other sectors can benefit from a weaker Canadian dollar. "Vegetable prices over the last year have been strong and it looks as if this year is going to be a great year as well," says Gervais. "The connection between U.S. and Canada is not as great as for grains and oilseeds."

**"Producers need to be on top of marketing," warns Olson. Volatility creates opportunity — and risk**

Longer-term impacts are hard to predict, but Brexit will certainly affect trade deals still on the table, like the Canada European Trade Agreement (CETA). "One of the consequences of Brexit is that this trade deal between Canada and the EU will have to be ratified by all parties in Europe instead of just being ratified by the government of the European Union," says Gervais. "That opens up the possibility that some countries might have different opinions about some very specific provisions of the trade deal which could jeopardize its future, but that remains to be seen."

"Because we're an exporting country, trade agreements like CETA are really important. I'm not exactly sure how Brexit will change it but there's going to

be a lot of negotiations. If you're producing a supply-managed commodity, in Canada, you will probably be hoping the agreement gets better for you," says Olson. "If you're producing pork there may be some advantages in terms of market access. I think there's some opportunity for us. We need to get those agreements in place because we've seen what happens if we don't. When the Koreans made a trade agreement with the U.S. before they did it with Canada, it hurt our hog exports to Korea."

Britain is a net importer of food so in the long term, once Brexit is completed, it could impact its trade relationship with the rest of the EU, which could open up some opportunities for Canadian producers, says Gervais. "I believe that ultimately the U.K. could be in a worse position than it was with respect to its European partners from a trade standpoint," he says. "That could open up a few opportunities for Canadian beef or a few commodities such as oilseeds."

Canada's agricultural trade with the U.K. isn't huge. In 2015, the entire EU accounted for only six per cent of Canada's ag exports, but it's certainly a market that Canadian producers would love to sell more products into. The U.K. is the third-largest populated country in the EU and accounts for 16 per cent of its gross domestic product. "Any time there is volatility in the market, it gives opportunity for producers," says Olson. "There's opportunities to take profit out of the market by locking in some better prices because volatility means overshooting, so the market overshoots high. The problem is, it does turn around and overshoot low so producers need to be on top of the marketing side of things."

So although Brexit may be an ocean away its consequences are likely going to be felt by Canadian producers one way or another. **CG**

# Profit-making N strategies

After a dry season, maybe it's time for some hard thinking about how you apply nitrogen

By Amy Petherick, CG Contributing Editor



Producers who applied their nitrogen in one pass this year at least minimized their application expenses. Those who opted for a split application and managed to co-ordinate it with well-timed rain perhaps gained more for their efforts.

Undoubtedly, however, both are questioning if their strategy was the right way to go this time.

And because of 2016's dry growing season, this may be exactly the right year to push those questions as hard as you can.

Mike Strang, who cash crops with his father Keith and brother Geoff near Exeter, Ont., admits they certainly had their own questions about their split application strategy during the spring, even though they are variable-rate veterans.

Strang recalls his dad always sidedressing anhydrous ammonia. Then, when the younger Strang became part of the farm more than a decade ago, they added a rate controller, and then came zone and pre-sidedress nitrate testing as a basis for variable-rate application.

"Then, when we went to strip till, putting more nitrogen up front didn't work so well because you were getting the pre-plant nitrogen in the soil test," Strang explains. "So we looked for another system and (that) brought us to the AgLeader OptRx last year."

With new technology in their arsenal, the application strategy this spring involved applying 50 pounds per acre of nitrogen at planting with their strip-till machine, then Y-dropping in another 60 pounds per acre around the six-leaf stage, followed by a variable-rate pass using OptRx sensing and Y-drop dispensing technology when the corn reached about five feet tall.

Last year, the OptRx/Y-drop combo seemed worth the investment and extra time spent in the driver's seat. This year, when there wasn't a cloud in the sky, it was harder to be so sure.

"We were really dry in June and I'm wondering if that first sidedress pass didn't quite get into the corn crop," Strang says. The crop never seemed to darken down, but stayed pale all the way through until the third nitrogen application.

Fortunately, after applying their late-season rate of anywhere from 60 to another 90 pounds per acre, Strang says they received two and three-quarter

Application technology is expanding his N management options, says Mike Strang.

*Continued on page 18*



**“The benefit of splitting nitrogen is you can respond to weather challenges,” says grower Mike Strang**

*Continued from page 17*

inches of rain. As far as he’s concerned, that was really critical timing.

“Later nitrogen available to the corn crop is probably better,” Strang now says. “I would even go later, but with our high clearance sprayer, if we get much taller than six feet we start breaking some of the corn.”

Yet he also knows that this might sound crazy to the neighbours.

Strang says they are one of only a few farmers in the neighbourhood using variable-rate application technology, and he can understand the appeal of one-pass strategies from a time management perspective. Still, most of the 1,000 acres of custom work he took on this year was done using his variable-rate setup and it hasn’t gone unnoticed that Hensall Co-op has outfitted three sprayers with GreenSeekers.

Strang says they believe there are several good reasons to invest in the latest application devices.

“I didn’t like using anhydrous anymore. It almost killed me a couple times, and so I really wanted to move toward a 28 per cent liquid fertilizer. To get a decent-sized applicator, you’re looking at \$40,000 and we bought a Y-drop system for less than \$20,000,” Strang reports.

“Year in and year out, with adequate rains, Y-drop versus a normal sidedress unit, yeah, there’s probably no difference. But for half the price of an applicator, I don’t see a downside to it.”

Strang says he also intuitively likes the idea of placing nitrogen right beside the corn rows so that it doesn’t take much rain before the plant gets access to it. Last year he thought he was being really smart by adding slow-release nitrogen to the mix and felt pretty good when the rains came. In hindsight, he should have gone in then and sidedressed anyway as soon as he started seeing yellow spots. This year’s lesson learned was not to trim the first application so much, so next year he’ll be back up to 80 or 100 pounds per acre pre-plant.

“We’re always learning,” Strang says. “But the benefit of splitting nitrogen is you can respond to weather challenges.”

Paul Raymer, of Practical Precision Inc. in Tavistock, Ont., says the Strang family really exemplifies the type of farm now moving to a split-nitrogen strategy. As one of the first companies to offer the GreenSeeker system to Ontario’s corn growers, he’s had the opportunity to observe early adopters of optical imaging share similar characteristics. Typically, they do belong to the younger generation of farmers and they show no fear of managing new technology. They also

have a mindset that is more future focused and less inclined toward repeating what has worked in the past.

Raymer recalls how, in the early years, many farmers genuinely could not accept the concept that corn was capable of consuming nitrogen after the knee-high stage. So he also believes adopters of this technology are more comfortable with scientific literature related to plant physiology and nutrient uptake.

“It’s been a culture shift,” Raymer summarizes. “Probably one of the big momentum drivers to this split nitrogen movement has been the cost of inputs.”

When he first started in the business, Raymer says nitrogen prices were through the roof and interest in the product was very high. More recently, nitrogen has been fairly decently priced and, for a number of farmers out there, it’s just simpler to put a little extra on. The only thing he thinks will influence those individuals to stop this practice is another price spike or regulation, something he’s convinced is only a matter of time.

“Then there are the farmers looking at every dollar,” Raymer says. “Maybe they have limited acres. They want to maximize the productivity of every acre, as much as they can.”

Quite often, he says, they’ve observed some of the best results on highly

manured ground. Since the technology was originally designed for conservation purposes by Oklahoma State University, it stands to reason that it's well suited to identifying manure application inconsistencies. And although it's not a silver bullet, Raymer says that on over 80 per cent of the fields the technology has more than paid for itself in either nitrogen savings or yield gains.

"We want to chase conservation, I think that's good stewardship, and trying to leverage from what we gain naturally," Raymer says. "But we may not pick up on what we're really generating naturally until it exceeds the height capacity of our traditional nitrogen applicators."

Raymer encourages growers to picture the growing life of a corn plant as having all the years of a human life compressed into one. "As soon as it gets into its adolescent years, its appetite is just going through the roof." If that plant gets short-changed, it will never grow up to achieve its maximum potential, so iden-

tifying potential deficiencies and amending those properly with a little spoonfed nitrogen at this time, makes a lot of sense to him. "We're really trying to maximize for the inputs that we're putting into this somewhat expensive crop to grow," Raymer says. "If nitrogen was stable in the soil, we wouldn't be having this conversation right now."

Echoing the very same sentiments is Paul Hermans, an agronomist for DuPont Pioneer in the eastern Ontario and Quebec area. However, the apparent behaviour of nitrogen in soils located outside of Ontario's dominant corn growing region adds a twist to these ongoing conversations. He offers some recent Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association Y-drop trials, which were undertaken by the Ottawa, Lanark and Dundas chapters last year to evaluate split rates and timing, and which failed to produce any significant results in those areas.

"Conversely, in southern Ontario, at

Pioneer we did some Y-drop trials and they got a bigger response," he says. Hermans says too that he has found eastern Ontario soils tend to be able to cook up more nitrogen somehow, most likely out of the soil types and their organic matter. "In general I think we can produce more nitrogen out of our soils, so what happens there doesn't always hold true for eastern Ontario," he offers.

Which isn't to suggest the new split nitrogen mindset is only being adopted in the southwest. Raymer says he's seeing more and more farmers applying 60 to 70 per cent of their nitrogen as pre-plant broadcast, or broadcasting and putting some nitrogen through the planter, and then coming back to sidedress. He also believes relying on soil nitrate tests is now common practice.

To Raymer, it's clear. If you aren't actively looking for improvements to your nitrogen application strategy, he says, you're leaving money on the table. **CG**

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