

## September 2018

With the Labour Day Weekend having come and gone, we can look back on the summer of 2018 and proclaim that it has been fantastic! What a contrast to the summer of 2017 when we had a cool, rainy environment all summer. Last year we hoped for a nice, warm, frost-free September and received that – just what was needed to make the corn and beans mature and set up for a nice harvest period. The 2018 crop is much more advanced than last year at this time, but we'll still hope for a dry, frost-free September to pull this up together with the anticipation of good yields and high quality, toxin-free grain.

North American hog numbers are a bit discouraging – Canadian hog farmers have dropped their inventories by about .5%, but hog numbers in the US are up by almost 6%. These stats alone forebode poor prices in the immediate future. The presence of African Swine fever in the heavily populated swine production areas of China, provides some short-term optimism in North American prices, at least until it is determined how this disease will affect the world supply-demand quotient for pork. The Chinese government has already culled over 25,000 animals in order to try to contain this spread of ASF.

### ***Jeff Buchanan***

### **Commodities**

---

August volatility was ever present again this year. However, this year was more a result of the existing trade wars than weather scares. Soymeal was down a whopping \$42/mt. Corn was steady and Wheat was down \$12/mt. I read an Ag report the other day and it is interesting to note the very significant differences in Corn and Soybean projected yields in Ontario. The Ontario Crop Tour projected yields of 179.5 Bu/acre for corn and 50.2 Bu/acre for Soybeans. A large and well-known Ag company projected 160.0 Bu/acre and 44.9 Bu/acre. These are very substantial differences. I guess the moral of the story is to never place huge bets based on someone else's projections.

### ***Jan Morris***

### **What You Need to Know about Concussions**

---

- It's not just athletes who get concussions! Concussions can occur anywhere under many different circumstances.
- A concussion is the most common form of traumatic brain injury. It may or may not involve a loss of consciousness.
- Concussion may be caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move back and forth rapidly. At work, hazards that may cause a fall, slip or trip, and vehicle collisions can result in injuries that can lead to concussions.
- Symptoms of concussion include loss of consciousness, headache or sensation of pressure in the head, nausea or vomiting, dizziness, seeing stars, blurred or double vision, slurred speech, balance problems, sensitivity to light and/or noise, difficulty concentrating or remembering, confusion, drowsiness, and an incoherent thought process. If a worker reports any of these symptoms, get medical attention. The worker should not be left alone or allowed to drive.

- With proper diagnosis and treatment, most people with concussions recover fully within a short period of time. In some cases, symptoms may linger for weeks or months, making return to work a challenge.
- Prevent concussions by: removing trip hazards; alerting workers to wet, slippery surfaces; keeping work spaces organized to avoid falling objects; storing heavier objects on the floor or close to ground level and ensuring the use of proper safety footwear, especially in slippery or icy conditions or on rough, bumpy terrain.

**Jason Elg**

**Fall is Upon Us**

---

Fall is right around the corner. It's good to reflect on some seasonal considerations for your operation. Sows being bred right now are going to produce offspring going to slaughter next summer, which typically gives us the highest market price of the year. Is there a maximum possible number of sows bred for your system? These are the money makers!

Several factors may have made it difficult to achieve the desired number of sows bred. Here are just a couple things to consider.

1. Gilt pool – are your gilt pool numbers high enough in order to have enough to breed during this time period?
2. Waves of heat this summer probably lowered the lactation feed intake in some sow herds and may have impacted breeding performance. Heat may have also led to an increase in sow mortality.

If you have fewer than desired sows being bred right now, are you able to source bred gilts from your genetics supplier? Or maybe you will delay the culling of a few older sows in order to keep the crates full?

It is a difficult time of year to ventilate perfectly – maybe it's time to have your system calibrated again, and check that your bandwidths are tight. Lower stress on the pig means faster growth, better feed efficiency, and more profit!

Fall / Winter is PRRS season – make sure your biosecurity is extra tight – protocols should be reviewed from time to time also. This is pertinent right now with ASF spreading in Asia and Europe.

Harvest is very important and time sensitive. I don't like seeing this come at the expense of productivity or profit in the barns though. Call me if any of these points spark something for you - I love brainstorming with customers and helping them maximize productivity and profit!

\* \* \*

Our last major holiday (short week) of summer 2018 will arrive on the Monday of Thanksgiving Weekend. Our mill will be closed on Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. Any extra assistance you can lend to plan your feed inventories to avoid outages on that day would be appreciated.

Corn harvest probably starts in about 5 weeks (silage probably early to mid September). Have a safe harvest – we very much appreciate your business.

Sincerely,

*Ron*

**“Laugh a lot. A good sense of humour cures almost all of life's ills.”**