

2009

Farm Summary

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Farm Summary

Abstract

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Disciplines

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Farm Summary

Wayne Roush, farm superintendent

Farm Comments

Developments. The year 2008 saw some facility improvements at the farm. Some of these were planned improvements, but others were related to severe weather events. Planned improvements included re-building the second half of the gathering lot fence and the transition fence at the highway cattle pass, replacing the wooden pen dividers in the cattle finishing shed with guard rail dividers, and installing three bulk bins transferred from another farm. The tall grass prairie plots established by transplanting 6,500 potted plants into 128 treatment areas in 2007 were grazed during the 2008 season after installation of perimeter fencing, a water tank, and 128 grazing cages.

Field Days and Tours. Six events were held during the year with a total of 358 people visiting the farm. The most popular event was the Cow/Calf Risk Management meeting held in August. Attendees learned how to minimize downside risk by using various techniques such as: day of delivery sale, forward contracting, futures, options, and livestock risk protection insurance. Some of the other events included the annual meeting and informational meeting, Manure Applicator Certification Training, and Pesticide Applicator Training. The farm also assisted the special 4-H Swine Show at the county fair and held a training session to allow the show entrants some experience at handling, caring for, and showing swine. The special 4-H Swine Show was designed for those with no previous swine experience.

New Projects. Optimizing soybean planting dates and rates for Western Iowa, M. Licht; Evaluation of *E. coli* colonization of steers fed

co-products, J. Dickson; and National phenology network study, M. Schwartz.

Livestock. The major emphasis at the farm continues to be livestock projects and production with a total of 326 swine finished, 112 steers finished in confinement and two groups of 20 and 28 steers pasture finished. Also, 56 steers were pastured. Losses due to circo virus was a major problem in the swine industry and for the research farm in 2007. However, a vaccination program at the farm proved effective with no swine losses attributed to circo virus during 2008. Feeding ethanol co-products continues as the major livestock project emphasis in both swine and cattle. Continuing projects include feeding dried distillers grains with solubles (DDGS) to swine and examining condensed corn distillers solubles (CCDS) as a feedstuff for cattle. Also continuing is the trial to define parameters in establishing an effective test for monitoring sulfur levels in steers fed CCDS. For this, samples of all feed intakes are collected (pasture, water, forage, and CCDS) at regular intervals. Also steer carcass samples of meat, fat, liver, and brain tissue are collected at harvest. Analysis of these samples is being used to devise a monitoring procedure to prevent sulfur toxicity problems in cattle fed ethanol co-products. One new livestock trial was added. It involves swabbing of steer hides at harvest in an attempt to establish whether co-product fed steers are more or less supportive of *E. coli*.

Crop Season Comments

Corn planting started on May 5 and was completed on May 6. Harvest started on November 3 and was completed November 4, with an average yield of 209 bushels/acre. Soybeans were planted May 13–14 and harvest was October 5, with an average yield of 42 bushels/acre. The odd weather pattern of

excessive moisture and below normal temperatures tended to harm bean yields more than corn yields. The excessive rains severely delayed hay making. As the pattern of

frequent rains continued, it also hampered hay curing. The delayed start, coupled with the extended curing, limited hay cuttings to only three for the year.

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