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CONNECTIONS

A publication dedicated to informing and connecting members.



Key Perspectives

New railcar shuttle loading system is chugging along in Nevada

By Boyd Brodie, General Manager, Boyd.Brodie@keycoop.com

THIS MONTH, I'm excited to share some drone footage of our new railcar shuttle loading system at the Nevada location. In the video, our team is loading

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Support Local

Growing our communities through matching grants

By Sara Clausen, Director of Communications, Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com

"SUPPORT LOCAL" has become a common phrase in Iowa and around our country. Mostly, it refers to spending your dollars in small communities and locally owned retail businesses. At Key Cooperative, supporting local economies is and has always been part of our identity. We are your essential business partner.

Cooperatives are naturally community-minded for many reasons, but not because we're required to be. We genuinely want to contribute to the sustainability of our communities, and that desire often results in supporting local businesses and organizations. For Key Cooperative, concern for community means encouraging our team to play an active role in economic development, volunteering our time and talents and financially investing in community projects.

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Beat the Heat This Show Season

By Ceara Smothers, Lifestyle Feed Sales Specialist; Brooke Gifford, Lifestyle Feed Sales Specialist; Carlie Miller, Feed Sales Intern

SUMMER IS OFFICIALLY HERE,

which means heat and humidity are upon us! For producers who manage livestock or lifestyle animals, it's the perfect time to implement changes to mitigate heat stress within your show livestock. During these days of high temperatures, it's important to recognize the signs and effects of heat stress.

Common signs of heat stress:

- Panting
- Increased respiration rate
- Increased water intake
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Increased saliva production

The negative effects of heat stress can include decreased feed intake, poor growth performance and loss

of freshness—all of which can be devastating when getting your show prospects ready for their big day! To mitigate heat stress, you should ensure your animals have access to shade throughout the day, as well as fresh, clean water, proper air movement and a balanced nutrition program.

The energy animals receive from their diet is allocated toward maintaining basic metabolic needs, then toward growth and performance. The digestion process creates heat to keep the body warm, but the excess heat must be released to keep the animal from overheating. If they cannot dissipate the excess heat, the animal will begin to eat less daily. This decrease in feed intake can negatively impact growth, performance and physical appearance on show day.

To make sure your animals are comfortable, happy and performing at their best, turn to Purina. Key Cooperative carries the full line of Purina® Honor® Show Feed and Purina High Octane® Supplements—for all species! Both the Purina Honor Show Feed and select lines of Purina High Octane contain Tasco®, a specific species of kelp meal that increases the dilation of blood vessels to help lower rectal temperatures in livestock during heat stress. These benefits have been documented through research, making Tasco a great option for your livestock during the hot summer months.

Contact Key Lifestyle Feed Sales Specialist Ceara Smothers at 641-260-6179 or Ceara.Smothers@keycoop.com to learn more about the options from Purina. ●

Friday
August 4, 2023

9:00 A.M. Check In
10:00 A.M. Shotgun Start

New Location!
**Terrace Hills
Golf Course**
8700 NE 46th Ave.
Altoona, Iowa

For registration or event questions, contact Sara Clausen at Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com or 515-388-8030.



**Reserve Your Spot
by July 14**

Registration Fee:
\$35.00 Per Golfer
(includes cart)

*Join us for fun
on the course!*

Lunch, Flight Prizes,
Hole-in-One Contest



Scan the code to register
or visit keycoop.com/golf



The Power of Being Dynamic

By Zack Gardner, Grain Marketing & Origination Specialist, Zack.Gardner@keycoop.com

THE PAST MONTH

has been all about the weather. We could argue that if we were to have a dry spell at any point in the crop year, this would be the time to have it. On the other hand, the dryness we've been experiencing is making everyone nervous, including the Funds traders. Every analyst and broker out there is talking about the weather. So instead of being the millionth person talking about the same forecast that may or may not be accurate, let's take a different approach. Like Boyd's article, let's talk about where your grain has gone this year!

It's been a unique year. Corn had a significant drought out in the Beef Belt (Nebraska down through the Texas panhandle), which had a very strong demand pull for most of the year. For soybeans, there was a huge fear in the export market with how dry South

America was, so there was a huge pull for exportable soybeans prior to Brazil's large February harvest. How did that impact the flow of bushels here in Central Iowa? (Note: The below data measures only elevator bushels, not direct-ship bushels to end users.)

Truck vs. Rail: 55 percent of the bushels in the elevators have been shipped via truck, and 45 percent have been shipped via rail.

Crush, Feed or Export: For corn, 70 percent has been crushed for ethanol and 30 percent has been used for feed. For soybeans, 51 percent has been crushed and 49 percent has been exported.

Corn Trains: Probably the most interesting of the statistics this year is where all the loaded trains have gone. Key has loaded approximately 11

million bushels of corn between our Newton and Nevada facilities. Here's a breakdown of the various states we've sent corn to:

- Iowa – 3,525,471 bushels (32.8 percent)
- Arizona – 2,616,663 bushels (24.4 percent)
- California – 2,596,277 bushels (24.2 percent)
- Idaho – 548,321 bushels (5.1 percent)
- Nevada – 455,000 bushels (4.2 percent)
- Kansas – 435,827 bushels (4.1 percent)
- Utah – 289,678 bushels (2.7 percent)
- Texas – 210,373 bushels (2.0 percent)
- Oregon – 55,887 bushels (0.5 percent)

Soybean Trains: Here's a breakdown of the approximately 5 million bushels of soybeans Key has loaded out via rail this year:

- Iowa – 2,076,402 bushels (42.5 percent)
- Mexico – 1,628,596 bushels (33.3 percent)
- Texas – 775,221 bushels (15.9 percent)
- Washington – 409,774 bushels (8.4 percent)

Key Cooperative is always looking for ways to bring additional value to our member-owners. This year, that value can be seen in stronger rail markets! By exporting more bushels, Key creates opportunity, increasing the local processor bid just that much more. Capturing the market is one powerful way a dynamic organization can deliver, and we hope you consider us your essential business partner in doing so. ●

Beat the Heat

The effects of heat stress on livestock can include poor appetite, decreased growth performance, and lack of freshness, causing their physical appearance to suffer.



All Purina® Honor® Show feeds contain Tasco®, a specific species of kelp meal (and vasodilator) that has been proven to support lowering rectal temperatures in livestock during heat stress.

Purina® High Octane® Supplements containing Tasco® include Champion Drive®, Power Fuel®, Powerfill® and Golden Ticket®. These supplements also have a higher fat content which produces less heat when digested and metabolized. Feeding higher fat diets during warmer months and seasons is an important strategy to support mitigating the effects of heat stress.



Protect against heat stress by feeding Purina® products containing Tasco® from Key Cooperative!





It May Be Summer, But We're Thinking About Winter!



By Scott Richardson, Energy Division Manager,
Scott.Richardson@keycoop.com

PROPANE IS AN ESSENTIAL part of the Energy Division at Key Cooperative. In fact, we've been delivering propane to customers for over 50 years! Propane is also essential to our customers' homes and businesses. We know our customers must have access to propane to get hot water, cook, heat their homes and dry grain. We couldn't serve our customers without the tireless work of our propane drivers. Key Cooperative currently employs eight full-time propane drivers who deliver to over 5,000 customer tanks. These drivers work all summer long, filling and inspecting gas systems to ensure our customers are safe and ready for the coming grain harvest. They also make sure our customers are going into winter with full propane tanks to heat their homes. Our drivers run all hours of the day, as well as nights and weekends—anything harvest demands. Then they continue on through the long, cold days of winter.

On average, our drivers will work over 6,000 hours next winter, make over 12,000 stops and drive over 86,000 miles. Some days, they will face sub-zero temperatures and challenging road conditions, testing the limits of their equipment to make sure everyone has the propane they need. To say our drivers are committed to being your essential business partner is an understatement. They have over 100 years of combined experience in delivery, training, certification and industry knowledge. We couldn't do it without them!

Key Cooperative prides itself on its ability to provide quality propane service to customers. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to highlight our drivers' efforts in this month's newsletter, especially since we're officially beginning to provide contracting options for winter. As I mentioned, our drivers have already started summer-filling propane tanks and will continue to do so through August. Contract offers will begin this month, which will help us plan and prepare for the heating needs coming this winter.

Key Cooperative offers fixed-price contracts with no deposit required, full prepay contracts and a budget billing program with level monthly payments. If you're a current propane customer, look for these offers in the mail in July and August.



You're Invited!
Join us at one of our upcoming
Energy Seminars

Kelley Office
July 11, 2023
10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Newton Office
July 13, 2023
10:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Learn about our new Energy programs, get product updates from industry professionals and hear from Keynote speakers.

For more information contact:
Chad Larson | 515-290-0009
Rick Kucera | 641-780-1624
Bob Rabey | 641-521-6318

Visit keycoop.com/news and click on 2023 Energy Seminars to RSVP.

Key Cooperative
County Fair
Meals

Key is proud to support 4-H and FFA families. Our team will be serving meals at several local fairs this summer.

Schedule:

- Central Iowa Fair - Friday, July 14, 5:00 - 7:00 P.M.
- Poweshiek County Fair - Friday, July 14, 5:30 - 7:00 P.M.
- Southern Iowa Fair - Monday, July 17, 5:00 P.M.
- Jasper County Fair - Tuesday, July 18, 6:00 P.M.
- Polk County Fair - Tuesday, July 18, 11:30 A.M.
- Story County Fair - Wednesday, July 19, 6:00 P.M.

If you're not currently a Key propane customer, please reach out to one of our Energy Customer Service Representatives at 800-469-1040 to find out which services best align with your needs. ●



Spotlight on Plant Health

Tar spot in corn

By Alex Branderhorst, Sales Agronomist, Alex.Branderhorst@keycoop.com

BY NOW, MANY (if not all) of you have heard of tar spot. It's a newer disease in corn that has taken the agronomy world by storm. If you've never seen the disease in person, you will soon because it continues to spread west across the Corn Belt. Let's take a closer look at tar spot and how we can mitigate it.

What is tar spot?

Tar spot is a foliar fungus that causes raised black spots on corn leaves, stalks and husks. It was originally detected in Indiana in 2015. Since then, it has spread west into Iowa. Eastern Iowa has taken the brunt of the disease thus far; however, tar spot continues to trek west, and the rest of the state should take notice. In fact, it has shown up in central parts of the state.

What does tar spot look like?

Symptoms of tar spot include small dark-colored spots on the leaf surface. The spots cannot be wiped off the leaf. In severe cases, these spots cause significant loss of leaf tissue, which is important for photosynthesis.

What conditions favor tar spot?

Tar spot loves moisture! Plants are more susceptible to tar spot when leaves stay wet for more than seven hours. Temperature and humidity also play a role. Tar spot prefers cooler (60°–70°F) and humid conditions. Continuous cornfields are also at higher risk for tar spot infection.

What are the implications of tar spot?

In severe cases, there can be 60 bu./acre yield loss. Tar spot reduces photosynthesis, which can cause premature dying off of the plant due to cannibalization of the stalks. This can lead to lodging and poor standability come harvest.

How do you protect the corn plant?

There are ways to protect against tar spot. At Key Cooperative, we offer premium fungicides to mitigate tar spot and other diseases. Miravis Neo, Veltyma® and Delaro® Complete are all great options for protecting your corn crop and alleviating any stress that may come.

Always keep the disease triangle in mind. Talk to your Key Cooperative Agronomist about tar spot management and any other disease questions you have. ●



Plant Disease Triangle

Pathogen

Virulent pathogen:
Fungi, bacteria, viruses,
nematodes, mycoplasmas
and spiroplasmas



Host

Susceptible
•Crop
•Cultivar

Favorable Environment

Air temperature
Soil temperature

Soil fertility
Soil type
Soil pH

Rainfall
Relative humidity
Soil moisture



Land O'Lakes Matching Grants

New Sharon Child Care and Preschool (\$2,000)

The center will utilize their grant to purchase a new security system, which is crucial to maintaining the safety and security of the children and staff. Pictured: Key Cooperative New Sharon Location Manager Kevin Franje (left) and Agronomist Alex Fynaardt (right) presented the matching grant to Director Regina Salsman and Board President Jess Tokle (center).

New Sharon Fire and Rescue Association (\$1,600)

The association will use the funds to replace a 25+-year-old air compressor system. The current 60-gallon air compressor is used as a shore line air supply to plug into their primary trucks. It's also used to pump up tires. The new compressor and air dryer will help keep the main station lines in good condition and save wear and tear on the truck air dryers. Pictured: Kevin Franje (left) presented the grant to Assistant Chief Brad Latcham and Gary Strobel.

Key Perspectives *continued from page 1*

one of the last soybean shuttle trains of the season. Shuttle trains are generally 110 cars and must be loaded and ready within 15 hours of the empty cars being placed on our tracks.

This new system replaced our old shuttle loading system, which was undersized and significantly damaged by the derecho. Fortunately, we were able to get the old system repaired well enough to limp through 2022, but it required nearly the entire 15 hours to load a train, and all the grain had to be funneled through just two bins in the concrete elevator. We were finally able to get our new system approved by Union Pacific Railroad and running last September.

We can feed the new loading system from three different 25,000 bu./hour legs that can retrieve grain directly from any of the steel bins. We can also use two 15,000 bu./hour legs from the concrete house. Each leg feeds through individual scalpers and screeners, which allows us to manage the moisture levels and quality of what is loaded into the cars to meet the grain specifications of the destination.

The loading speed is essentially twice as fast as the old system. It has the ability to adjust quality while loading, reducing the need to unload cars (which also slows down the process). The team has been able to reduce the actual car loading time to under six hours. After moving different

sections of cars around, they can routinely complete loading in about eight hours. Prior to the derecho, the old system required 13–16 hours, making it extremely difficult to meet the 15-hour requirement.

We've also been able to load over 2 million bushels of corn on 10-, 20- and 50-car strings this past year. I anticipate we will end up loading the equivalent of 35- to 40-unit trains, representing about 15 million bushels of member grain by the end of the old crop in early September. We will also move roughly 7 million bushels through our rail facility in Newton. Combined, that equates to well over 20 million bushels of our members' grain going out to external markets. That's roughly 25,000 semi loads that will not wait in lines at local processors, significantly improving our logistical efficiencies.

As we move through the summer months and the markets tighten up ahead of the new crop, make sure you stay in contact with the Key Grain team: Zack, Greg, Linda and Jarod. You can also check in with any of our locations to get offers in place to capture any opportunities provided by the late growing season market volatility. From all of us at Key Cooperative, have a safe and productive summer! ●



Scan to watch drone footage of the new railcar shuttle loading system at the Nevada location.

Land O'Lakes Matching Grants



North Mahaska FFA (\$1,800)

The class currently has some virtual reality headsets, but they would like to have more so students can all use them at the same time. This innovative style of learning introduces students to new animal science curriculum, where they are able to see animal organs and bone placement. Additionally, the class will use the headsets for natural resources and plant science curriculum. Pictured: Kevin Franje (left) presented the grant to Ms. Miranda Johnson and the 2023–2024 officers of the North Mahaska FFA.



United Community PTO Backpack Buddies (\$1,000)

The United Community PTO Backpack Buddies program supports over 30 children each weekend with meals and snacks. The program recently added a food pantry to further supplement families. Pictured: PTO President Maggi Butler and Principal Elyse Brimeyer received the matching grant from Key Cooperative CFO Stacey Webster (left to right).

Support Local *continued from page 1*

With locations in 13 communities, Key employees and Board members have a tremendous opportunity to make an impact. To do so, we've leaned on our partners at the Land O'Lakes Foundation. Thanks to our relationship with a regional cooperative, Land O'Lakes offers Key a dollar-for-dollar match on grants that we turn into local gifts. These grants are classified into two categories: community- or hunger-related grants. Key has the full responsibility of selecting which projects we wish to support.

"Land O'Lakes has a longstanding tradition of utilizing our Foundation to invest in rural communities," said Kevin Hinders of Land O'Lakes. "Our local retail and cooperative members know the needs of their communities best, and with them we can make a much greater impact than we could alone.

"Key Cooperative has a great history of investing in hunger relief and many other needs of the communities they operate in, and we appreciate the opportunity to partner with them," he continued. "The agriculture industry needs rural America to thrive and provide resources to the farmers and farm laborers who live in the area."

Concern for community has always been at the heart of Key's identity. As producers of food, we often gravitate

Over the past decade, Key Cooperative has contributed more than \$250,000 in Land O'Lakes matching grant dollars back to our communities.

toward projects that feed the most people. "We value our local food pantries and banks, meal assistance programs and youth after-school programs," said Key Cooperative General Manager Boyd Brodie. "The need is great. Thankfully, we have the Land O'Lakes funding to leverage along with Key Cooperative donation dollars to help lessen the burden of hunger in our communities."

Key's matching grant program receives dozens of applications each year. We're proud to say that public services such as fire, EMS and law enforcement as well as education and community development projects often take the top honors in our community category. After all, those are the gifts that keep on giving back to our communities, day after day! ●



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Roland, Iowa 50236

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PHOTO CONTEST WINNER: HERE COMES THE SUN

By Kim Flynn, Nevada



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Would you like to see one of your photos featured on this page? Enter the Connections photo contest, which is open to any member or customer who receives our newsletter. One winning photo will be selected and placed in the newsletter. **Winning photographers will receive a \$20 gas gift card!** Photos must feature agriculture or rural settings; Iowa-based scenes are preferred. Photos must be submitted by the 10th of each month in order to qualify for the following month's newsletter. Please include your name, address, phone number and email address with your submitted photo(s).

Submissions may be emailed to Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com.

Thanks to Kim Flynn for this beautiful snapshot from earlier this spring!

Key Connections is sent to you courtesy of Key Cooperative. Please send comments or suggestions to Sara Clausen at 515-388-8030 or at Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com.