

Jan. 18, 2013

River Valley MFA

Volume 2, Issue 1



Newsletter

Weed Management Today, Better Yields Tomorrow

By: Jason Mefford– MFA Crop Consultant

Inside this issue:

Weed Management	1
Upcoming Events	2-3
Forward Contracting	4
Handling Cattle	5
Scholarship Information.	6-7
Gold Star Minerals	8-9
Weed Management Cont.	10
Missouri Corn Growers Association	11

Cutting back on weed management this year may create a monster next year. The increase in the seed bank and the proliferation of possibly herbicide resistant weed biotypes nearby means that weed management for the next growing season will be crucial and it may take years to return the seed bank to a previously lower level. In the upcoming growing season, the use of adjuvants may be well worth including in your herbicide arsenal.

To understand how adjuvants work, it's important to know why weed management was tough this past season. All leaves have a waxy covering (cuticle) surrounding the outside of the leaf. The covering reduces fungal problems by allowing water to run off the leaf and helps protect the leaf under harsh environmental conditions which will thicken the cuticle. Herbicides have to pass through this waxy barrier and a thicker cuticle means potentially less herbicide entering the plant.

When plants are affected by drought, they go into survival mode, shutting down or reducing any function not necessary to maintain life. As the cuticle thickens to reduce moisture loss, plants begin closing off leaf pores where moisture leaves the plant (stomata). This closure slows down water movement, which in turn causes nutrient/herbicide movement to slow within plants. In perennials or weeds with taproots, this results in less herbicide reaching the root system before the plant can metabolize the herbicide.

Adjuvants play a role in aiding herbicide movement into the plant. There are three types of adjuvants that work directly with herbicide chemistry: surfactants, concentrated crop oils, and fertilizer salts. The herbicide a grower uses will determine which adjuvant is recommended. (Continued on page 10)



All of us at MFA River Valley would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our patrons for your business during 2012. We wish you all the best in 2013.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Upcoming Events:

Planter Seed Meter Testing

Why does River Valley offer Planter Seed Meter Testing?

Preventing 20% planting error with corn at \$5.50/bushel will EARN you **\$26.40** per acre.

Contact Matt Stock or your local River Valley manager for more details by February 1st, if possible, for the best offers and timely service. Matt Stock - Phone: 816-694-7187 or Lexington Office: 660-259-2263.

MFA Gold Star Mineral Program

Nov. 15, 2012 - March 31, 2013

Customers who purchase 1 ton (all “one” product) of MFA Gold Star Mineral will receive an MFA Oil \$25 Gas Card thru the mail.

Customers may receive additional \$25 gas cards for each additional 1 ton mineral purchased.

Contact your local River Valley location for more details,
or contact Chad James at 573-823-2272.

Monsanto Seed Discount of 3% if booked by February 13, 2013

Contact your local River Valley Seed Salesman or Location Manager for more details.

RIVER VALLEY

We will have an “Appreciation Day & Open House” at the locations and dates listed below. Please choose your normal place of business and mark your calendars for the appropriate Date and Location.

Lunch will be served from 11:30 to 1:30 (Fish Fry with sides)

Alma and Higginsville= Corder VFW Tues Feb 19th

Odessa= Odessa Store Wednesday Feb 20st

Norborne= Norborne Store Thursday Feb 21st

Lexington/Levasy= Lexington VFW Friday Feb 22nd



We look forward to seeing you soon and we appreciate your continued support!

District Meeting: March 8, 2013 at Sedalia MEC Building MO State Fairgrounds

Districts 5, 8, & 9

Directors: Tom Lichte, David Callis and Harry Thompson

Upcoming Events:

Western Farm Show

February 22-24, 2013

American Royal Complex

1701 American Royal Ct. Kansas City, MO 64102

This is The Place to Be.

The Western Farm Show is at the heart of agriculture and as the Midwest's premier indoor farm show, this is definitely the place to be. There are over 500 exhibitors and 400,000 sq.ft. filled with the latest in farm and ranch equipment, livestock supplies, buildings, fertilizer, feed, seed, tools, irrigation systems and much more. The Family Living Center features crafts, home improvement ideas and all the supplies you need to make a house a home. Visit the Health & Safety Roundup Area for health screenings and safety ideas. Everything is right here, under one roof.

MFA Sponsored Events:

Cattle Outlook Seminar

Friday, Feb. 22, 2013

Presented by: Randy Blach of Cattle Fax

Low Stress Livestock Handling Demo

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Scott Pavilion (adjacent to American Royal Complex)

Cost?: This event is FREE for anyone in attendance at the 2013 Western Farm Show

Presented by: Ronald Gill, Ph.D., Texas AgriLife Extension Specialist

Central Life Sciences: Fly Control & Grain Pest Control

Sunday, Feb. 24, 2013

Returning to lead the livestock sessions, for the third year, is Dr. Ron Gill, Texas AgriLife Extension Specialist. Dr. Gill has been providing technical expertise to livestock producers in beef cattle nutrition, management and livestock handling techniques for over 21 years. Ranchers can learn how to incorporate the economic benefits of improved livestock handling through reduced sickness and labor, and improved weight gains.

“We are extremely excited to be working with MFA, Inc. who is helping to support and promote the Livestock Demonstration during our Farm Show,” says Ken Dean, Manager of the Western Farm Show. “Everyone at MFA, Inc. is helping to make this a must-attend event for livestock producers—regardless of the size of their operation.”

Stop by your local River Valley MFA for discount tickets!

Forward Contracting Grain

By: Aaron Skinner– General Manager & Grain Coordinator

Is this the year to forward contract grain? That is the question I have been asked many times over the past several months as producers were fall-applying anhydrous and fertilizer. Long term seasonal trends indicate that yes you should. However in 3 of the past 6 years the market has bucked the seasonal trends by showing us higher prices during or just post-harvest; leaving us with an interesting dilemma.

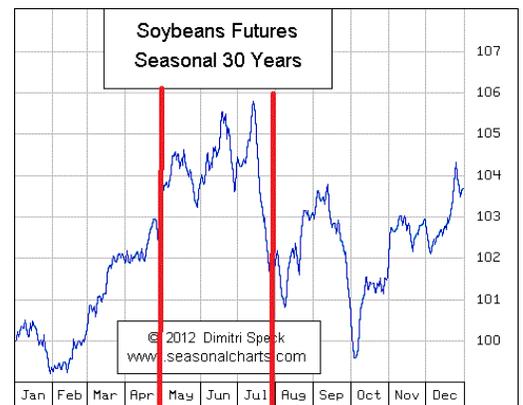
Seasonal trends show us that most years prices will be higher for the crop prior to planting and before early July than they will be the rest of the crop year. Except for drought years like 1988, 1995 and 2012, prices will usually peak in March through June. Market volatility has risen drastically due to increased hedge funds, ethanol, increased South American production and increased Chinese demand in recent years. These factors, in conjunction with several dry growing years, and world-wide economic issues, have turned “seasonal trends” on their head.

Seasonal price trends follow the production cycle, and last I checked we are still planting in the spring and harvesting in the fall, which would suggest that more times than not, the seasonal trends will continue. Look at it from decade to decade. In 1988 the Corn Belt experienced a significant drought with prices increasing into harvest. However, the 1980’s as a whole held true to the seasonal trends of previous decades. The same can be said about the 1990’s.

So why would we want to stick with forward contracting grain when the Supply and Demand situation is so critical? (Continued on page 9)



Left: Seasonal trend chart for Corn.



Right: Seasonal trend chart for soybeans. Notice that for the past 37 years the top prices are received March through June-July.



Left: Corn futures monthly price chart from 2006-2012.



Right: Soybean futures monthly price chart from 2006-2012.

Handling Cattle

By: Jon Roberts - Area Sales Manager Livestock Products



Greetings from our outfit to yours.

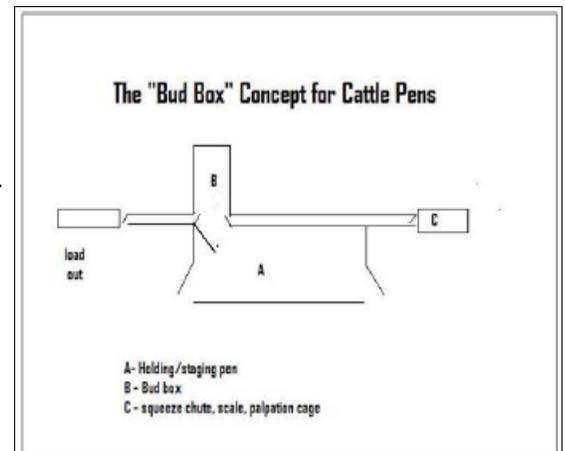
Cattle operations are diverse in terms of how intensely managed they are. One of the most challenging aspects to any cattle operation is when it comes time to handle the cattle in close quarters. At the very least, they will need to be transported from your location at some point. To make a profit in the cattle business, good stockmanship is a must. Good facilities and an understanding of cattle behavior will serve you well. Here are some basic concepts about cattle behavior:

Cattle seek each other's company and want to be together, especially when feeling threatened.

Cattle will only move for you when they clearly have a place to go.

Cattle see you best from the front and side.

Knowing these simple characteristics will help you design and implement sorting, processing and loading facilities that work best for the cattle and the handler. When designing a sorting or processing area, if the cattle are moved to the opposite end in a smaller group, the natural tendency to return to the main herd will facilitate the flow, sorting, and moving to the processing area. River Valley has access to seven major brands of processing equipment. Starting from the back and working forward, you can choose from a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ sweep using open panels or fully sheeted. Other options include a gated system, or a "Bud Box" design. Moving to the alley section, you can have a drop gate or slider. You can have "no back" devices that suspend from overhead or are spring loaded along the side. The alley can be rigid or adjustable, half or full sheeted. It can be straight sided or V shaped. Moving on to the chute, the rear entry can have a drop gate, slider or scissor style end gate. It can have one side squeeze, two side squeeze, parallel, or V design.



(Continued on Page 6)



Left: Applegate Portable Corral Sweep and Alley System. Available for order at our River Valley locations.

Scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS: It's that time of year again, time for area high school seniors to decide what they want to do with the rest of their lives. If they decide to attend college, scholarships are extremely helpful in providing the financial means in order to achieve their aspirations of a higher education. MFA and River Valley offer scholarships to graduating seniors of local high schools. Each MFA and MFA affiliated location gives at least one local high school senior a one-time \$2,000 scholarship.

Missouri Corn Growers Association and the Missouri Corn Merchandising Council also award scholarships totaling \$7,500 each year to deserving college juniors and high school seniors. Applicants must submit an application form, official high school or college transcript and a least one letter of recommendation to the Missouri Corn office. For more information go to www.mocorn.org.

Have your high school seniors ask their counselor about the MFA scholarships. If the counselor does not have information on these scholarships please contact your local MFA or River Valley store for more information.

Handling Cattle

By: Jon Roberts (continued from page 5)

Moving to the headgate, variations include self catch or manual, V or straight. Other modifications include neck extenders, breast bars, rubber floor, head plate, side exit, top access, bottom access, palpation cage, free standing load cells, hydraulic, and the list goes on.

With all these different traits to select for when making genetic decisions for your cattle one that can get overlooked in cattle selection is docility. With an aging population of beef producers, more emphasis might want to be placed on this trait. There are reams of data that document the fact that wild cattle perform poorly and negatively impact the performance of their pen mates.

MFA carries many brands of cattle handling equipment, including Powder River, Applegate, WW, B bar D, Tarter, Behlen Silencer, and My-D-Handy. We can match up your needs and budget to the system that will make the most dollars and cents. Unless you relish the notion of having your cattle working escapades becoming fodder for Baxter Black, stop by your local River Valley MFA location or give me a call anytime.

Adios Amigos!

Jon Roberts

Area Sales Manager

660-641-1333 Cell

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MISSOURI CORN SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.)—The Missouri Corn Growers Association and Missouri Corn Merchandising Council will award \$7,500 in scholarships to deserving students in 2013. [Applications](#) for the Missouri Corn Scholarship Program are now available for high school seniors and college juniors pursuing a degree in agronomy or related area of agriculture.

“We feel the scholarship program is a great investment in agriculture’s future,” noted Missouri Corn Scholarship Chairman Mark Scott of Wentzville, Mo. “As technology and production practices evolve, an education provides a firm foundation for a successful career. We encourage all high school seniors and college juniors pursuing a degree in agronomy or agriculture related fields to apply.”



High school senior applicants must be Missouri residents from a Missouri farm or rural area. They must plan to attend a two- or four-year Missouri college or university and major in agronomy or agriculture-related field. The scholarship funds will apply toward the freshman year of college expenses for high school winners.

College applicants must also be Missouri residents from a Missouri farm or rural area, and currently a junior enrolled in a Missouri four-year college or university majoring in agronomy or agriculture-related field. The scholarship funds will apply toward the senior year of expenses for college winners.

Missouri Corn Scholarship applications are available for download at www.mocorn.org under the [Resources tab](#). Interested students can also call the Missouri Corn office toll-free at (800) 827-4181 to request an application. Students must submit an application form, official high school or college transcript and at least one letter of recommendation to the Missouri Corn office by Feb. 8, 2013 to be eligible.

Applications will be reviewed by the Missouri Corn Scholarship Committee and recipients will be notified by mail on or before April 15, 2013. This is the seventeenth year Missouri Corn Scholarships have been available. To learn more about Missouri Corn programs, please visit www.mocorn.org.

Doug O'Dell Joins River Valley Team as Applicator

Doug lives in Blue Springs, Mo with his wife Katie who is a Pharmacist at St. Luke's in Lee Summit. Doug played basketball at North Central Missouri College, and then attended Northwest Missouri State in Maryville. He grew up in Tina, Mo with an older brother and sister.

Doug comes to us from MFA in Mexico, Mo where he was also an applicator. In his spare time he likes to hunt, fish, and golf. When Doug has time off he and his wife love to travel and help his Dad and Father in Law on their family farms.

Doug says, “Odessa is just one big family.”

We are pleased to have Doug join our group. His knowledge and experience are a great asset to our River Valley team.



GOLD STAR MINERALS

By:



As we enter the winter months now is the time to start thinking about a winter feeding program and any minerals that you may need to purchase. Proper nutrition is vital for both the calf and cow in terms of health and productivity. When cattle suffer from a lack of nutrition during the winter months, they will have a tendency to lose weight and is harder to breed back in the spring; cows produce less milk and thus weaning weights suffer, calves are less thrifty and more susceptible to death, disease and parasites.

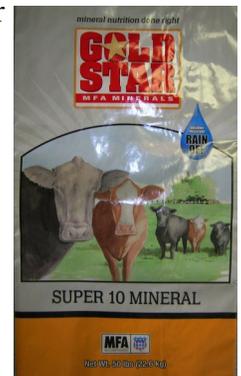
Stop by your local River Valley MFA location to provide you with everything you need to help improve performance in your livestock herd. From complete feeds and supplements to animal health products and more. River Valley offers a full line of premium quality products to meet your livestock needs going into the winter.

Here are a few recommendations that we offer from the Gold Star Mineral line during the winter months to help keep your cattle on track thru the winter and heading into spring.

MFA Super 10

MFA Gold Star Super 10 Mineral is an all-purpose, high-quality mineral that may be fed year-round. It is an excellent mineral source for beef cattle on grass or grass/legume forages and lactating or non-lactating dairy cows on forage and grain rations.

- Contains a 2 to 1 Calcium/Phosphorus ratio making it economical and ideal for free-choice feeding to all classes of livestock on legume and non-legume roughage
- Contains Taltec® and molasses to encourage consumption. Results in less dust, fresher feed, more energy and overall better health
- Reduces caking due to moisture exposure and allows easy consumption in varied weather situations
- Contains chelated Zinc, Copper, and Manganese to increase hoof wall hardness and improve reproductive performance and growth rates
- Contains Selenium to improve reproductive performance
- Fortified with vitamins to improve overall herd health for better performance



MFA Breeder 12

MFA Gold Star Breeder 12 Mineral is an all-purpose mineral for all classes of livestock when legumes comprise the majority of the diet. It's especially ideal for dry cows.

- Contains 12% phosphorus, balanced with calcium making it ideal to meet high performance expectations with breeding animals
- Contains Taltec® and molasses to encourage consumption. Results in less dust, fresher feed, more energy and overall better health

GOLD STAR MINERALS (Continued)

- Reduces caking due to moisture exposure and allows easy consumption in varied weather situations
- Contains chelated Zinc, Copper, and Manganese to increase hoof wall hardness and improve reproductive performance and growth rates
- Contains Selenium to improve reproductive performance

Contains high levels of Vitamins A, D & E to improve overall herd health for better performance.



Forward Contracting Grain (Continued from page 4)

By: Aaron Skinner: General Manager & Grain Coordinator

First, many of you are locking in Expenses on Fertilizer, Seed, and Chemical prior to the end of the year; however you have No sure grain price established until you make a Forward contract or use the Futures market to cover yourself. Your crop insurance price won't be established until after the first of the year and currently the markets have been in a steady decline.

Look at it like you would a stock market portfolio: You wouldn't undo your long term marketing program based on short-term reasoning. You are in the market for the long term so manage your risk accordingly. Don't add risk to your marketing program by abandoning the seasonal trends, but do look at adjusting the amount of production you market based on those seasonal trends. The past two marketing years have been tough on the seasonal trend marketing programs. However, corn demand has fallen significantly due to higher prices and if we have a "normal" crop year, given the most recent estimates for U.S. planted acres at 99 million corn acres and soybean acres at 78.9 million (according to Informa estimates released 12-19-12), we could see a year with big production, and excess supplies, at least until the demand is able to catch up. We could see the remainder of this decade trade in accordance to the seasonal price trends we have witnessed the past 5 decades.

Continue to spread your marketing risk throughout the year, covering all or a portion of your input expenses. If you choose to store a portion of your grain unpriced, make certain you can be profitable after adding in the additional handling, storage and interest expenses. And don't forget to include your time as an expense as well.

Contact Aaron Skinner at 660-584-3676 or 660-641-0578 or email askinner@mfa-inc.com.

Weed Management Today, Better Yields Tomorrow (Continued from page 1)

Surfactants have many different roles depending on the chemistry used. Cationic and anionic (positive and negatively charged) surfactants are great wetting agents and some cationic surfactants are preformulated with herbicides (e.g. Roundup®). However, nonionic surfactants like ASTUTE, ASTUTE LITE, and ASTOUND do not have a charge and can be used with a wide variety of herbicides and are not affected by ions in hard water. Nonionic surfactants are good dispersing agents, soluble and stable in cold water, and have low toxicity to plants and animals.

Silicone-based surfactants work even better than nonionic surfactants. They disperse water droplets better and are humectants (humidity creating). Combining these qualities increases the amount of herbicide entering the plant in addition to reducing the time for herbicides to become rainfast. However, silicon surfactants are not compatible with herbicides that need small concentrated deposits, such as glyphosate.

Regardless of the surfactant used, all disperse water droplets. This is done by breaking the surface tension of water allowing the droplets to spread out rather than bead up. This is especially important when using contact herbicides such as *Cobra*®. Contact herbicides do not move through the plant, so coverage area is extremely important.

Concentrated crop oils and methylated seed oils like RELAY, EXCLAIM, and SOY PLUS enhance uptake of herbicides by penetrating the cuticle. The waxy cuticle is made up of fatty organic compounds as are these oil-based adjuvants. Because they have similar chemical properties, the oils and cuticle are chemically attracted to one another allowing better penetration of the herbicide through the cuticle. Oils also keep herbicides in a liquid state longer, further aiding herbicide uptake. Methylated seed oils are smaller less complicated molecules, which makes them lighter and more effective at penetrating the cuticle. Crop oils and methylated seed oils must also contain an emulsifier in addition to requiring agitation to keep the oil suspended in water preventing buildup on the water surface.

Ammonium sulfate (AMS), 28% nitrogen, and 10-34-0 fertilizer solutions like AMS ADVANTAGE, AMS DEP, and AMS-EZ PLUS enhance uptake of herbicides by reducing the pH on leaf surfaces. Lowering the pH of most herbicides makes them more fat (lipid) soluble, which means they can penetrate the cuticle better. It is also thought that as plants take in some of the ammonium ions, pathways are created for herbicides to enter the plant. AMS also “conditions” hard water (AMS Advantage and Astound) high in magnesium and calcium ions for herbicides, especially glyphosate which binds to these ions reducing its effect. Adding AMS before adding glyphosate to the mix can protect the herbicides active ingredient against binding. In addition to these benefits, fertilizer salts draw moisture, keeping the herbicide in a liquid state on the leaf surface longer allowing better uptake. AMS will work well in cooler temps because salts build humidity easier at lower temps.

The chemistry behind herbicide adjuvants make them worth a second look in the next growing season. Knowing how adjuvants work and their role in plant physiology will help you become a better weed manager. Always follow herbicide instructions and use the recommended adjuvants labels suggest.

For more information on weed management contact:

Chris Blake at 785-447-1242 or

Nelson Guier at 224-209-9127.



MISSOURI CORN: DEFENDING YOUR MARKETS

By: The Missouri Corn Growers Association

The Missouri Corn Growers Association (MCGA) is a longtime advocate of the corn industry, representing growers from the field to the halls of the capitols.

Our organization works hard to defend markets for corn and its co-products and ensure fewer governmental roadblocks. Thanks to strong grassroots, we have been able to make great strides to move the corn industry forward. Here are just a few examples of MCGA membership at work:

Getting Your Money's Worth on Crop Insurance

Due to efforts from MCGA and the National Corn Growers Association, corn farmers saw two positive changes to their 2012 crop insurance policies. Working directly with the USDA Risk Management Agency, growers had a chance to adjust APH yields as well as experience lower premiums due to an adjustment of loss ratios. This is especially significant given this year's disastrous drought – to the tune of over \$50 million in increased income for Missouri growers.

Defeat of Farmland Tax Increase

The General Assembly rejected an 8 percent tax increase proposal on farmland grades 1-4 after MCGA went to work with Missouri House and Senate leaders to defeat the proposal, recognizing the possible negative implications for farmers recovering from natural disasters.

Keeping the Family in Farming

In May, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) officially withdrew proposed rules that would have severely impacted farm families and rural America. These proposed rules would have put strict limits on the type and nature of work a child under the age of 16 could perform on a farm. When the DOL announced these proposed rules in September 2011, MCGA submitted written comments and went to work with Missouri's congressional delegation to fight back. This victory serves as yet another reminder of the good things we can accomplish when working together.

There is still work to do and 2013 could bring more challenges and new battles. Our industry is strong, stronger than it has ever been. Our voices are getting louder. Now, more than ever, we need to stand together to defend and grow the corn industry. If you are an MCGA member, thank you for your commitment to the corn industry. If you are not a member, please join by visiting www.mocorn.org or calling (800)827-4181.



Missouri Corn also has dedicated field staff to address local policy issues and stay current on information to best serve grower concerns. In western Missouri, contact Aimee Gutshall, agutshall@mocorn.org, or Kerry Rose, kröse@mocorn.org.

From all of us at MCGA, best wishes for a prosperous new year.

River Valley MFA

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Higginsville 660-584-3676
Levasy 816-650-3122
Lexington 660-259-2261
Norborne 660-594-3341
Odessa 816-633-5591

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Nevada, MO 64772



We're on the Web: www.rivervalleymfa.com

Upgrades Happening in the River Valley Group:

Odessa Scale Upgrade: The pit scale at the elevator/plant in Odessa is being upgraded and modified. This scale is being upgraded to an electronic scale. In addition, the pit will be modified so water will run off the west side. The scale and approaches will be lowered and a ticket delivery system will be installed. Upgrades are underway and should be completed the first part of March. If you would like to deliver grain during the upgrade you can be weighed at the retail store up town.

Alma Branded Feed Bins: Alma will be adding five 54 ton overhead bulk feed tanks. With recent changes to MFA's micro-mills, this upgrade will allow the River Valley group to meet our customer's bulk Branded feed needs in a cost effective and efficient manner. In addition, we have added to our truck fleet in Lexington in order to service our customers as well as other area MFA locations. Ground breaking should begin in the next few weeks and will likely be completed by the end of March. Please let us know of your feed needs as soon as possible so that we can coordinate deliveries efficiently.

To receive nightly grain bids and comments via e-mail, send your e-mail address to askinner@mfa-inc.com and request bids be sent either nightly or once a week.
We can also send bids via text messaging.

The River Valley MFA newsletter is coordinated by Aaron Skinner. If you have any agronomy, feed, seed, animal health, or grain topics you would like us to address, please call Aaron at 660-584-3676 or send an e-mail to askinner@mfa-inc.com.