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Recap



SPRING WORK

This spring was one for the books and the summer so far has been the same. We started planting our first field of corn on May 13th. We finished planting soybeans on June 7th. We ended our planting with 10% of our acres being Prevent Plant & we just got across those acres to spray in the end of July & we are still trying to seed a cover crop on those acres.

This spring was late, cool & wet. Which presented many challenges including emergence, timing, changing of plans, etc. Basically nothing got done as planned. The corn was planted into cool soils (under 50 degrees) but had ample to excessive moisture. The strip-tilled and cover cropped ground was the first stuff we could go on. The cover crop sucked up some moisture and the strip-tilled ground stayed firm enough for the equipment to float across the field with ease.

One of our many issues this year was getting all of the fertilizer down for the crop. We had to broadcast 28% over our strips as a weed and feed system (first time doing this). We also had to change what crop we planted on a few fields due to the wetness of certain fields and this made getting the P & K down difficult. But a couple fields we were able to up our rate of (low salt) pop up fertilizer to make up for the P & K, and another field we had to bring in a premixed solution which had all of the nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulfur we needed.



SUMMER

The common theme to this summer was “rain delays”. When I would make a recommendation to spray something one week it might take 2 weeks to finally get that field sprayed. Thankfully we utilized Enlist E3 and LLGT27 soybeans this year which both allow you to spray multiple modes of chemicals on them post emerge. This allowed us to take a little extra time and still clean our fields up to our high standards.

One thing we are learning about this summer is the effect of cereal rye grass stubble has on weed pressure and our growing plants. We are trying to lessen our dependence on synthetic chemicals all while trying to keep the ground living. So, we flew on cereal rye last year into the corn and we no-tilled 3 fields of soybeans or pinto beans into the green rye. This has created a matt as shown in the picture and has suppressed weeds. (as pictured)



CROP CONDITIONS

Crops have been behind from the word go this spring! But we are catching a lot of nice sunny and warm days that are drying the fields out. Now with this heat and drier soils the roots can breathe some oxygen and the plants can really shoot up. We are still a couple weeks behind last year.

Our corn looks very good if it was not drowned out or hasn't been sitting in water most of the spring. This is very evident in the field we have tilled, usually has wet spots that struggle and uneven corn, this year that is not a huge factor because we tilled the low spots and put the poor producing areas into salt tolerant alfalfa.

Our soybeans and pinto beans do not look good at all. We were able to get 3 fields in by middle of May this year, and they are our shining stars. They have stayed drier and have had time to grow taller and put on more nodes before the summer solstice. Watching this we are going to plant as many beans early in the upcoming springs they really seem to do better in the long run.



Above is a plane spreading rye as a cover crop into standing corn



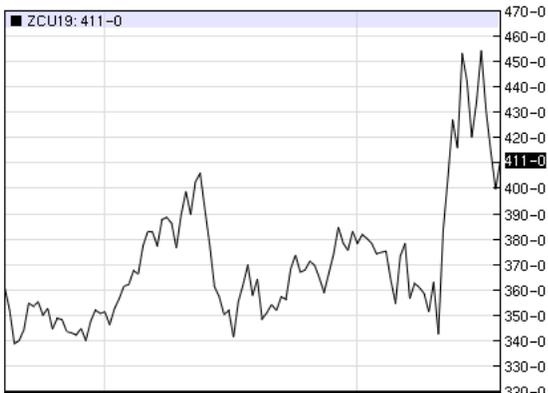
Above is a drone picture of a strip-tilled corn field



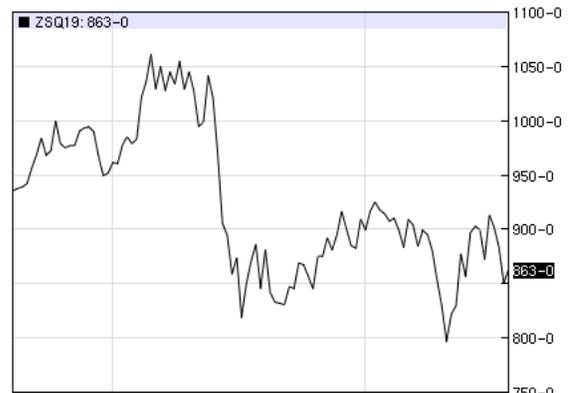
MARKET UPDATE

As shown in the charts below this year has been one wild ride if you are following the markets. In corn the market after last year's yield predictions the corn hit a low and didn't seem to change much at all, then again, the spring of 2019 it dipped back down to that previous low. Planting issues in the corn belt and a little stronger demand finally brought the corn market up to \$4.50 futures which makes corn profitable again, but with the August 12th report, we returned to sub \$3.80 corn which is not profitable.

Soybeans on the other hand, do not look good at all. You can see there was some strength in the market until another record harvest last year and the tariffs from china on our ag products are killing the market. 80% of the soybeans in North Dakota go to the Pacific Northwest and then over to china. There hasn't been a ton of demand for our soybeans. The latest news is that China is going to stop buying all ag products, so we will see where it goes from here. They are currently well below our break evens. Below are 2-year snapshots of the corn and soybean markets.



Above: 2-year snapshot of the corn market



Above: 2-year snapshot of soybean market

Looking Forward



Grayson (17 months in this picture)



Brayden side dressing with Dad (Proud Dad moment)



REGENERATIVE FARMING PRACTICES

Regenerative Farming is a term used by people in the industry that are talking about good farming techniques for the ground, ecosystem, future generations. This can be anything as doing No-till, Strip-till, use of cover crops, better placement of fertilizers.

On our farm we are trying to introduce more biology to the soil by utilizing more cover crops, sugar and carbon-based products. These products can only help build organic matter soil biology, and soil structure. To really make a difference you need to incorporate them with no-till/strip-till systems all while minimizing traffic across the field. All of this ultimately results in healthier soils which require less fertilizer and chemicals it also reduces erosion, and increases water infiltration, which makes farming much more sustainable.

This is very hard to quantify but this last week I was down at the National Strip-till conference in Peoria IL. They showed us ways of doing this. Such as finding worm holes, granular or blocky structure in the soil structure, and speed it takes your residue to break down. All three of those are ways to determine if you have healthy soils and you are building for the future. Below on the left is corn being planted into strip-tilled rye cover crop. Middle I am No-till planting Soybeans into 24-inch rye.



FALL OUTLOOK

This fall is looking like it might be another super tough fall. The crops will need as much time and heat we can possibly get before a hard frost. This means harvest will probably start 2-3 weeks later than normal. We have some tracks that were created in wet conditions so we will have to inline rip (low disturbance ripper to break up compaction) a few fields.

We are planning on strip-tilling all our corn ground for next year. This saves on passes across the field, but it takes valuable time to build the strips right and make sure we are applying the right amount of fertilizer. We also planning on increasing our acres of cover crops.



EDUCATION

We are a firm believer that farming/business is changing everyday, which in spite of that we need to continue to educate & better ourselves on a regular basis. In effort to continue our education we joined a peer group this winter and had our first meeting in late July at a large dairy in Wisconsin. Our peer group is constructed of 12 farms across the Midwest, with each one having different profit centers. We spend 3 days at each operation interviewing and reviewing the host farms business & we share ideas on how to improve their business. My biggest take away from our first meeting was the approach the dairy farm took at its many challenges due to the 24/7/365 business that they are in.

FAMILY

This year has been a wild year on the family side also. As many may know mom was diagnosed with breast cancer for the second time this February. But she went through all the chemo treatments again and handled them like a champ. She was able to help most of the spring and summer still; we all hope that this is the last of that for a very long time.

Zane and Cami's boys are still doing great, Brayden is 3.5 years old now and is riding in more and more equipment with his dad or I. Grayson is now 1.5 years old and is still doing very good, they keep monitoring his heart and there is no date for surgery as of now. I personally think he is too stubborn to let his condition to affect him, I plan on seeing him in the cab of the tractor plenty this fall.



THANK YOU

We would like to thank all of our employees, consultants, & landlords (our team) for everything they do. It truly would not be possible without them & we are so appreciative. We have an awesome team that makes us love what we do every day, regardless the challenge.



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