

AGDAY 2022



Wheat is harvested near Grand Forks.

Grand Forks Herald file photo by Dorothy Edwards

Ukraine conflict's ag, fuel price spikes coming to ND

BY SAM EASTER

Grand Forks Herald
Grand Forks

Usually, farmers would say higher crop prices are a good thing. But Jim Pellman, a farmer near McCluskey — a community approximately 100 miles northwest of Jamestown — hates to see it happen like this.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has jolted global markets — in corn, wheat, fuel and more — sending economic ripples far beyond eastern Europe. For North Dakota farmers like Pellman, it means wheat and corn crops could soon fetch a higher price. It's something Pellman

said he's sorry to see.

"Nobody likes that any more than they like to see a drought," he said. "A war is life and death. I hate to see higher prices because of that."

Pellman is the vice chairman of the North Dakota Wheat Commission, farming wheat, barley, canola and more with his two sons. He said the recent invasion has been especially hard for nearby neighbors who have relied in recent years on Ukrainian farmhands, whom the neighbors have been trying hard to reach since the Russian invasion began.

Markets have already recorded volatile swings for

commodities like fuel and wheat, with one American benchmark for crude oil surging since mid-February. Minneapolis wheat prices whipsawed in the early days of the invasion, something Erica Olson, market development and research manager for the North Dakota Wheat Commission, said is likely the result of "nervousness" in the market that will generally result in higher prices.

"Over the years Ukraine and Russia — the Black Sea region in general — they've become very large producers of wheat in the world, and large exporters as well," she said. "... Those two countries make up a good chunk of wheat

exports. If their customers have to start purchasing from other regions, that is going to start eating into supplies."

Frayne Olson, a North Dakota State University agricultural economist, pointed out that price shocks in the United States might be more muted for wheat farmers. That's because the kind of wheat grown in Ukraine and Russia is of a lower quality, often bound for regions that like to buy wheat for bargain prices, like Egypt or northern Africa.

American wheat, he said, is usually purchased by countries willing to pay a higher dollar for higher quality. That means that

despite a dip in global supply — which will likely send prices higher — the effects in the upper Midwest likely won't be as strong.

And experts agree that the timeline is important, too. Olson points out that the spring planting season is coming in the spring; July harvest won't be far behind. The longer the conflict drags on, the more food supply it could interrupt.

"So come May, if things haven't settled down, or if we still have a lot of problems and disruptions, there may be some shifting and changing of acres planted in both Ukraine and Russia," he said.

Fall rain, winter snowfall sets up region for normal spring

BY INGRID HARBO

Grand Forks Herald

GRAND FORKS — The Red River Valley is officially free of drought, according to the U.S. drought monitor.

On March 1, for the first time since September 2020, the monitor indicated that all of eastern North Dakota and much of northwestern Minnesota are out of drought conditions. In the 18-month stretch, some or all of the Red River Valley was classified as at least abnormally dry in the National Drought Mitigation Center's reports, with most areas considered to be in extreme drought at the peak in August 2021.

But after fall rains and winter snow, Adnan Akyüz, North Dakota state climatologist, is predicting a normal spring for farmers in the region.

"August and October were wet, and since October, eastern North Dakota started receiving helpful amounts of precipitation," said Akyüz.

However, that rain came too late for some producers last year. He compared the 2021 drought to the 1988 drought, which cost the state of North Dakota between \$5 billion and \$10 billion. According to the National Centers for Environmental Information, the drought in 2021 cost the state between \$2 billion and \$5 billion.

Even with rain coming too late for some crops, it set up the region for a wetter spring, which Katelyn Landeis, NDSU Extension agent for Grand Forks County, is pleasing to most farmers.

"It was nice to get that rain into the ground before freeze-up," said Landeis. "In terms of spring, at least there's been some fall moisture and now we've had some good winter snow and snowpack, so things are actually looking up going into spring."

Liquid amounts in snow sitting on the ground range between 1.5 and 2 inches, says Akyüz. In the unlikely event that precipitation stops for the spring, that snow will be enough to keep soil moist through the planting season,



Eric Hylden / Grand Forks Herald

In this Herald file photo, Crookston, Minn., farmer Tim DuFault is shown on June 22 preparing his bins for an early harvest, as the drought of last summer gripped the region.

he said.

"Even if precipitation stops, that snow is going to melt and is going to be available for soil to soak in," he said. "It will be enough moisture to at least take care of the first half of the spring for agricultural activities such as planting."

Farmers, too, are optimistic about the coming spring.

Joe Hastings, general agronomist at American Crystal Sugar, is hoping conditions are right to get beets into the ground in April or the first week of May, which gives the crop a long growing season.

"We're hopeful with last year's rainfall and soil moisture to get the beets started this spring, and then they can tap down and the roots can go

down very deep to access the moisture that's there," he said. "Granted, we might need some more timely rains in the summer to help maintain that crop again, too, because of last year's drought."

Tim Dufault, a wheat farmer from Crookston, Minnesota, says rains in the fall gave him hope for the spring, but until he knows what kind of weather is in store for the valley, he can't predict what the crop will be like.

"We got a good recharge. There is something to get the crop started," said Dufault. "So that will get us going, and then it's up to whatever comes after that."

According to Akyüz, the amount of water available in the region now will increase chances

of rain later. As temperatures rise and snow melts, some of that water starts evaporating, adding more water vapor to the atmosphere.

"Evaporation will take place in the spring, and locally provided moisture sources, such as soil moisture, is going to positively impact rainfall in the springtime," he said.

He says the potential to slip back into drought conditions, or to see a worsening of current drought conditions, over the spring and summer is more likely to occur in western North Dakota.

"Currently, western North Dakota is experiencing extreme drought and those locations are going to be still coming into the spring with drought, and

potentially in the summertime it is possible that the conditions can get worse," he said.

But after a cold and wet winter, there is a chance for flooding. Flood risk along the Red River valley varies — in Fargo, the major flood potential for the spring is 90%, says Akyüz, but in Grand Forks, the chance of meeting or exceeding major flood stages is 25%.

For now, Landeis says it does not look like flooding will be a problem for most farmers in the region.

"We were super wet in 2019 and 2020, and even if we have some flooding, it's not going to be anything compared to that," said Landeis. "I don't think anybody's too concerned about it at this point."



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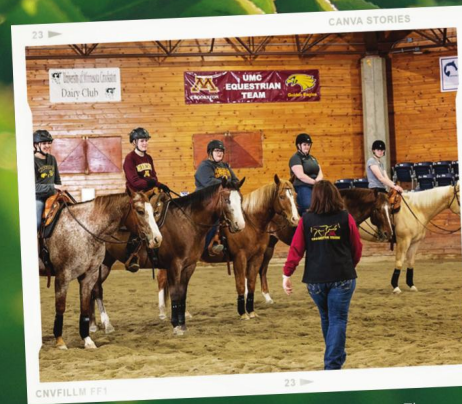


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\$20,000 gift secures construction of new lean-to, enhances equine program at UMN Crookston

BY MICHELLE CHRISTOPHERSON

UMN Crookston CROOKSTON, Minn. – The UMN Crookston Equine Program and the Equestrian Team reached its \$35,000 fundraising goal last month. Dollars raised will benefit students and construct a new lean-to that will be built in May.

Roy Johnson, a University of Minnesota graduate and a former faculty member who works in Equine and Full Farm in Cargill Animal Nutrition, says the Minnesota horse industry relies on the education and student experiences gained at UMN Crookston.

“I personally believe some long-term investing in UMC is appropriate, which is why I am

personally supporting the equine programs. The lean-to as an example, will contribute to the success of the program for the students and animals but long term for the industry through educational priorities and student experiences,” he said.

In late October, the University of Minnesota Crookston equestrian teams kicked off fundraising for team travel, equipment and a new lean-to.

“I am thrilled that our goal of thirty-five thousand dollars was reached,” said Athletic Director Stephanie Helgeson. “While our student athletes raised and met their goal of \$15,000 it is the support from our alumni, corporate partners, friends and families that ensures our teams have the ability to keep building

a tradition of excellence while establishing a legacy within the equine program.

“Each lean-to will expand our horse capabilities by three to four horses, by hosting more broodmares to foal out for the MN Bred program and/or take in an additional three to four Off the Track Thoroughbreds for re-training,” said Nicky Overgaard, UMN Crookston equine instructor.

“The lean-to will be utilized year round by the program. We will host five to 10 mares to foal out and have the capability of increasing the number of foals each spring to at least 10 foals.”

“The impact and investment of Mr. Johnson’s investment and generous gift will be used to construct a lean-to, it will benefit students and our animals,” said Morgan

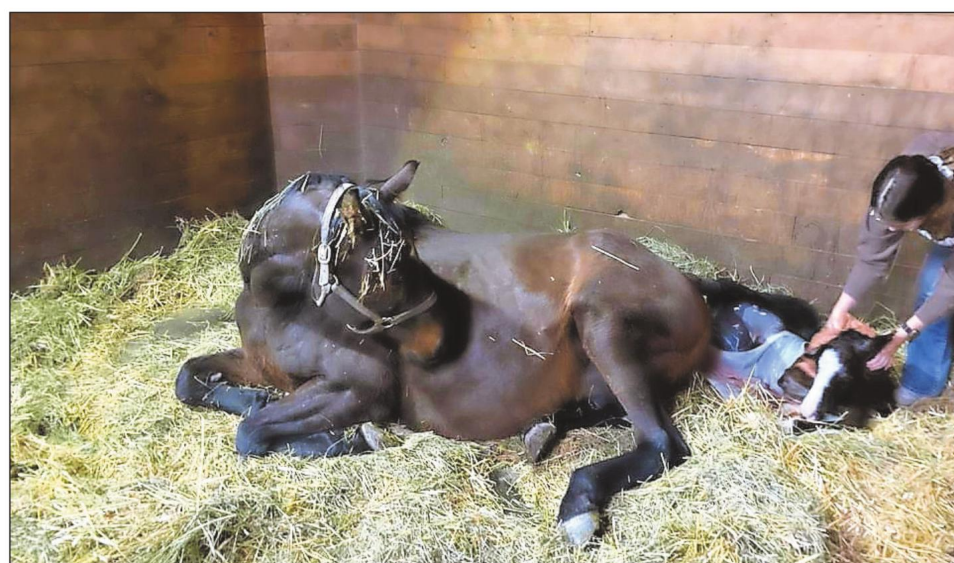


Photo courtesy of UMN Crookston

Pyles, Ph.D., equine assistant professor. “Students will continue to engage and participate in experiential learning, like foaling out mares, bringing in Off the Track Thoroughbreds for boarding, breeding and re-training. These activities expose students to a whole new facet of the equine industry and better prepare them for the next

phase of their career.”

The students and the industry will benefit from these improvements to our equine program,” she said.

This investment will expand the campus horse capabilities for years to come, faculty say. The lean-to will be utilized year round by the program. If you wish to make a contribution, one that makes

a difference for students by investing in the equine programs, support them both in and outside of the classroom, contact Michelle Christopherson, mchristo@umn.edu or 218.281.8369.

Michelle Christopherson is director of outreach and engagement at the University of Minnesota Crookston.


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MOSES conference gears up organic producers

BY NOAH FISH

Agweek staff writer
LA CROSSE, Wis. —
Every winter, the MOSES Conference brings together farmers and ag professionals to learn the latest organic and sustainable farming methods.

At the 33rd Annual MOSES Organic Farming Conference, held at the La Crosse Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Feb. 24-26, attendees ranged from longtime certified organic producers to farmers just starting organic or considering the switch.

The event held every year on the Mississippi River shares the latest information on organic while giving a space for organic producers to connect with each other and to others in the supply chain.

“Forty three of this year’s almost 60 workshops were developed

through conversations with affinity groups led by farmers,” said Lori Stern, executive director of MOSES. “They identified skills and knowledge related to their operations, but also gave voice to cross cutting issues that affect all production areas.”

MOSES serves the upper Midwest where most of its board members come from, but Stern said the staff now encompasses individuals from across the country.

“I guess one of the benefits of the pandemic is the recognition that we can do this remotely, and hire folks from other places than where the office is,” she said of the organization’s making a broader call out for staff positions available.

Stern said the three-day event is the largest organic farming conference in the country.

“If you’re doing vegetables, and you think it might be interesting to integrate some livestock, or integrate conservation practices — there’s expertise for all of those things in this building,” said Stern. “And I think that the other benefit of having so many people across different production methods is interest in cross cutting topics that matter to all farmers — whether it’s business planning or some policy pieces.”

That extends to cultural and social issues, said Stern, to inclusivity of organic certification programs and solidarity economy principles.

“So as we think about equity and parity across the entire supply chain in the food system, are farmers getting their fair share as well as everybody along that supply chain?” said

Stern. “Those conversations are what the organic movement was kind built to forward along — what is the food system that we want to see? How do we center people and the planet in what we do in farming and food systems?”

A focal point for the organic movement

Wisconsin is second in the nation in organic production

“So even though we’re small, we’re mighty in that way,” said Stern.

Stern said Vernon County, where Organic Valley started, has always been a “front runner” in getting the organic movement going. The Driftless area which Stern called an “amazing place to farm” has a diverse collection of small-to-medium scale farms and organic dairies as well. That’s part of the reason MOSES is

held every year less than an hour away from the county.

“I live on kind of the edge of the Driftless, and the rolling hills is what attracted me,” said Stern, who is from Wisconsin originally but lived out in Washington state for a while. “I knew I just couldn’t go back to something flat after being somewhere with mountains, and Mount Rainier — and that area of Wisconsin is just extremely compelling and so beautiful.”

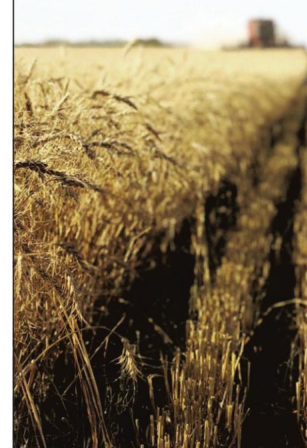
“It lends itself to more diversified production methods, because it’s not flat and monoculture is not as easy.”

Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin is the president and CEO of Regenerative Agriculture Alliance, vice president of MOSES.

“I moved to the United

MOSES: Page 7

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Considerations when purchasing feed outside your region

BY NDSU EXTENSION

Limited forage quality and quantity due to drought has resulted in many North Dakota livestock producers purchasing hay and other feeds from outside their region that would normally be harvested from their own farms/ranches or purchased locally. Although many ranchers purchased hay early, challenging weather has forced some to look for additional supplies to get them through the remainder of the winter feeding period.

“When purchasing feedstuffs, it is important to ask a lot of questions to avoid issues related to poor forage quality, contamination with weeds and the presence of toxins such as nitrate,” says Janna Block, NDSU Extension livestock systems specialist based at the Hettinger Research Extension Center. “Clear and honest communication from both parties can help ensure a successful business transaction.”

Important information buyers should request from the seller includes:

- ▶ Month and year of harvest
- ▶ Packaging and type of wrap (net wrap, twine, etc.)
- ▶ Average bale weight
- ▶ Species composition
- ▶ Potential for presence of noxious weeds, mold, etc.
- ▶ Length and method of storage

“Producers should also ask sellers for nutrient analysis on any purchased feedstuffs,” says Block. “If sellers have not submitted samples for analysis, purchasers should request them to do so. Dry matter content, crude protein and an estimate of energy are necessary for making an informed



NDSU photo

Purchasing hay and other feeds from outside the region requires buyers to ask important questions.

decision about purchasing a particular type of forage.”

Block adds that in order to use limited feed supplies effectively, it is important to understand how forage can be best used to meet nutrient requirements for various classes and production stages of livestock.

While it is sometimes necessary to look for feed from distant locations, this increases challenges for buyers.

“Even if results of laboratory analysis are available, producers are often purchasing hay ‘sight-unseen,’ which makes it difficult to evaluate physical factors such as leafiness, maturity, color, smell and condition of the bales,” says Block. “If possible, request pictures of the bales in storage or take the time to inspect them in person prior to purchase.”

Certain types of forages may contain high levels of nitrate. These include species such as sorghum and sudangrass,

drought-stressed corn and annual cereals such as oats, barley and wheat. If purchasing forage that may contain nitrates, a representative sample should be submitted for laboratory analysis.

In addition to nitrates, there may be other anti-quality factors present in forages that can be difficult to quantify or evaluate. These include structural components of the plant or secondary metabolites that can cause toxicities and nutrient imbalances in livestock.

“For example, grasses such as tall fescue, perennial ryegrass and reed canary grass can produce alkaloids (plant compounds) that associate with a fungus and cause heat intolerance, lameness, decreased feed intake (or increased feed refusal) and other animal performance issues,” says

Karl Hoppe, NDSU Extension livestock systems specialist based out of the Carrington Research Extension Center.

“This is one example of why it is important to research various species before buying and feeding harvested forage from other areas.”

Limited hay supplies across the Great Plains region have increased competition for resources, and prices have responded accordingly. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) provides hay auction reports (available at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/hay-reports>) that ranchers can use to evaluate pricing in a variety of locations based on forage quality guidelines.

Transportation costs can add significant amounts to the total purchase price. It is important to talk through all the details associated with trucking when purchasing feeds, such as whether the cost is based on loaded miles or roundtrip miles and whether or not trucking is included in the price of the hay. Ranchers are encouraged to check with at their local USDA Service Center to inquire about hay transportation assistance programs that will help reduce freight costs.

Zac Carlson, NDSU Extension beef specialist, also encourages farmers and ranchers to check out the NDSU FeedList website, which is designed to connect feed sellers and buyers (available at: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/feedlist>).

“Each listing includes information about what each seller has for sale, how the feed is stored (large round bales, small bales, etc.) and the seller’s contact information. Prospective buyers can select what they

want to buy and contact the sellers,” says Carlson. “Using the FeedList is free of charge.”

“Prices and nutrient content should always be compared on a dry matter basis when making decisions about feed options,” says Hoppe. “Feed that is 80% moisture may seem competitive at \$50 per ton delivered, but when priced on a dry matter basis is \$250 per ton.”

Hoppe adds that a step-by-step guide to comparing feeds is available at: <https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/publications/livestock/comparing-value-of-feedstuffs>.

Tim Petry, NDSU Extension livestock economist, suggests livestock feed buyers, sellers and haulers have written contracts. Contracts should include details such as the names of the parties, the price of the commodity, the terms of the agreement, transportation details and signatures.

He also urges ranchers to beware of payment scams in which buyers are being asked to pay by direct deposit only and sellers are not available to answer questions about the feed.

“Be cautious of anything in your communication with potential sellers that seems out of the ordinary,” says Petry.

Purchasing forages and other feeds from out of state is just one of many management and financial challenges due to drought. Careful evaluation and planning prior to purchase can help ensure that feeds will meet livestock needs in a cost-effective manner. Contact your local NDSU Extension office for additional information.

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MOSES

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States in 1992, and soon after I started attending the regional meetings,” he said of MOSES.

Haslett-Marroquin remained active in MOSES through the tenure of Faye Jones, MOSES executive director from 1999-2016, and has been presenting on regenerative poultry at the conference for the last five or six years.

He described the annual conference as a “large neighborhood gathering.”

“I would say you would have everything from agroforestry all the way to row cropping,” he said of the MOSES conference. “I am assuming even some conventional farmers come here, because a lot of conventional farmers are starting to think about organic practices, and this is the place to come and learn about organic, sustainable, regenerative way of thinking.”

Haslett-Marroquin said MOSES is a place where multiple backgrounds are represented and everyone is welcome.

“You got everybody from multiple colors of people is, multicolor people — you get a lot of older farmers, newer farmers, and you will see some kids walking around too,” he said. “This is a neighborhood gathering, and more like a convergence of people with different backgrounds trying to define the future

of agriculture.”

For producers thinking about switching to organic on their operations, Haslett-Marroquin said MOSES is the place to start their education.

“If you are thinking of a different way of doing agriculture, yes, this is the premier, probably the only event in the country at this scale that brings this kind of ecosystem together,” he said.

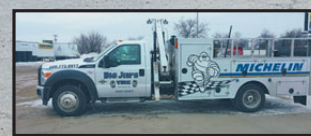
He said he wanted to be on the board for MOSES because it is a critical piece of institutional infrastructure for the Midwest.

“My vision was that we can start a new conversation about how MOSES can move into becoming an ecosystem management institution, and where we actually focus on gathering the multitude of expressions that are out there in the landscape across the Midwest, and then we then serve as an organizing pivot point for affinity groups within the larger context of agriculture,” he said. “And then establish governance systems and more representation consoles, and so on, so that we can build governance at a scale that can actually represent this new movement.”

“Until we organize, we are just simply a whole bunch of people doing cool stuff,” he said. “It’s time to actually get into the organized as an actual industry sector that is leading the future of agriculture in this country.”

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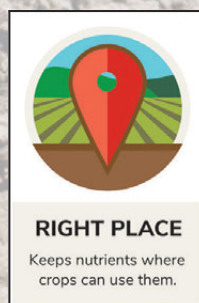
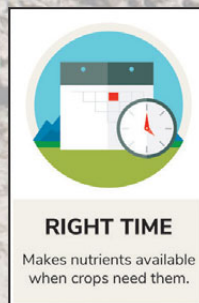
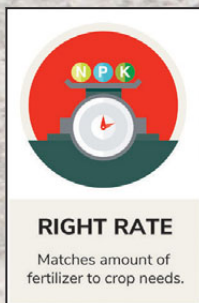
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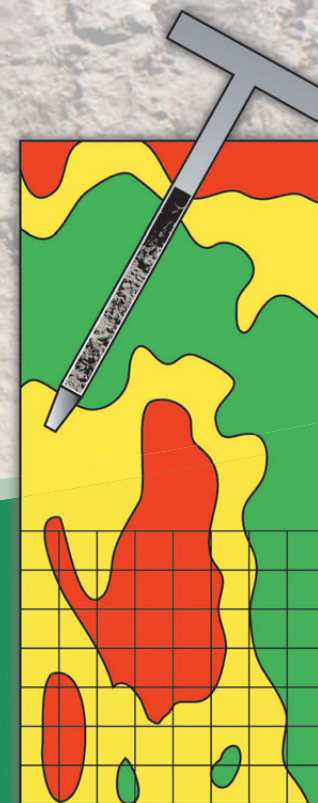
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Fall tillers may provide an opportunity for normal pasture turn out this spring

BY NDSU EXTENSION

In 2021, North Dakota experienced one of the worst droughts on record. This resulted in significant impacts to forage production on range, pasture land and hay land across the state.

As we look forward to 2022, the question is how the 2021 drought will impact the upcoming grazing season.

"Thanks to above average rainfall across much of the state this fall there is potential for producers to see average forage production in 2022 if we receive normal rainfall in April through June," says Miranda Meehan, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension livestock environmental stewardship specialist. "Rains during this period are responsible for 80 to 90% of forage production in the state. The exception will be the western portion of the



Photo by NDSU Extension

state where extreme (D3) and severe (D2) drought persists."

The ability to achieve normal forage production in 2022 will depend on grazing management decisions made in 2021, specifically fall grazing and the

level of grazing use going into the winter.

"Fall plant tiller development has a direct impact on plant growth during the subsequent year for all cool-season grasses, which are dominant in our grassland," says Kevin

Sedivec, NDSU Extension rangeland management specialist. "Cool-season grass tillers, such as western wheatgrass, Kentucky bluegrass, smooth brome grass, green needlegrass and crested wheatgrass, that developed from late August through early October are the first plants to green-up in the spring. If these tillers are eaten or die due to drought, then spring growth must occur from new tillers developed in April and May."

Following the 2017 drought, tillers development in the spring occurs two to four weeks later than the previous year's carry-over tillers. Tillers that develop in the spring come from buds that broke dormancy in the spring, usually when soil temperatures stay about 40 F for three or more days. However, the tillers established in the fall will grow as soon as temperatures are favorable, Sedivec notes. If livestock consumed these fall tillers below the growing point, in between the bottom two leaves, they usually will not survive the winter. Drought also will affect these fall tillers. Fall droughts either do not allow buds to come out of dormancy, thus no new tiller growth, or cause death to those tillers that did grow. If tillers did not establish or survive this fall, producers should expect to see a delay in

grass development and growth this spring.

"Expect normal plant growth in the spring of 2022 if your pasture or hay land produced new tillers in late summer and early fall 2021," says Sedivec. "This scenario assumes spring moisture in May and June 2022 is at or above normal for your area, and livestock did not graze below the growing point during the fall or winter months."

Meehan and Sedivec advise delaying pasture turn-out on pastures or cells that experienced drought in the fall of 2021 and no green-up occurred or livestock overgrazed the pasture to the point of removal of the plant's growing point.

"Delay turnout until the dominant forage species in a pasture reach grazing readiness," says Meehan. "Grazing readiness for most domesticated pasture is at the three-leaf stage, whereas grazing readiness for most native range grasses is the 3.5-leaf stage. The delay in grazing readiness could be one to two weeks, or longer depending on spring temperatures and management in 2021."

This delayed turnout is usually caused by delayed growth and development, which results in a lack of standing forage.

"When production is low due to delayed tiller

development, it becomes easy to run out of forage more quickly if you go to full stock too early, leading to over-use," says Sedivec. "This over-use during early green-up leads to reduced plant vigor and reduced leaf area, impacting photosynthesis and reducing food (carbohydrate) stored in roots. In the end, you may sacrifice 45 to 60% of forage production for the year by grazing too early."

Although drought impacted much of the Northern Plains in 2020 and 2021, above normal fall moisture in many areas of North Dakota created the opportunity for new grass tillers to develop. These fall tillers will provide an opportunity for normal pasture turn out this coming spring and potential for a good hay producing year if rainfall is at or above normal in May and June 2022.

"If drought persisted in your area, thus no fall tillers survived or grew, or livestock over-used a pasture that contained fall tillers, expect a delay in pasture turnout in 2022," says Meehan. "You may also experience a delay in hay harvest and even below normal hay production in 2022 if no fall tillers survived, even if spring moisture in 2022 is near normal."

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NDSU Extension projects commodity prices for 2022

NDSU EXTENSION

Planning for the future can be a very frustrating process especially in times of market volatility. Planning typically pays high dividends. For most farm and ranch managers, developing realistic commodity price expectations is one of the most difficult and complex tasks of the planning process.

To make the planning process easier, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension has released its 2022 short- and long-term agricultural planning price projections for North Dakota, says Ron Haugen, NDSU Extension farm economist.

The publication shows 2022 price projections for crops and livestock

produced in the state and price estimates for future years. Price projections are given for the major crop commodities, including wheat, durum, oats, feed barley, malting barley, oil sunflowers, nonoil sunflowers, corn, soybeans, canola, flaxseed, winter wheat, dry beans, dry peas, lentils, alfalfa hay and mixed hay.

Price projections for livestock and livestock products include beef steers and heifers at various weights, cull cows, slaughter steers, slaughter hogs, slaughter ewes, slaughter lambs, feeder lambs and milk. The publication also provides historical prices as a reference.

"The estimated short-term planning prices should be used as a guide

in setting price expectations for 2022 production," says Haugen. "These planning prices can be used for preparing annual enterprise budgets and annual whole-farm cash flow projections. Cash flow projections are very critical with today's tight margins."

"Short-term prices should not be used for planning capital purchases or expansion alternatives that would extend beyond the next production year," says Haugen.

The "Plotting a Course 2022" publication (EC1090) is available online at: <https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/ag-hub/publications/plotting-a-course> or by contacting your county NDSU Extension office.

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Russia invasion of Ukraine has big impact on sunflower oil market

BY JENNY SCHLECHT

Agweek
MANDAN, N.D. — North Dakota and South Dakota are the “heartbeat” of the U.S. sunflower sector, said John Sandbakken, executive director of the National Sunflower Association. But in terms of global exports, Russia and Ukraine are the biggest players, and that means the conflict between the countries will have a big impact on the world sunflower market.

“When you look at that Black Sea region of Russia-Ukraine, you know, in the whole world, they produced about 60% of all sunflower oil,” he said. “And they export about 75%, so obviously they’re really key exporters and something that really is going to affect the world by not having that oil in the market.”

The U.S., in comparison, exports only 20% of its sunflower oil, with the main markets being

Canada, Mexico and Japan. Neither Russia nor Ukraine are U.S. competitors for those markets, but Sandbakken expects an impact on all global vegetable oil markets as ports are shut down in the Black Sea.

“We’re not really competing in the same markets, but when you take that much oil off of the market, it’s something that’s going to have a ripple effect about all veg-oil markets and so it’s going to have some effect on our business,” he said.

Even before Russia invaded Ukraine, sunflower prices were strong, largely because of a small 2021 crop. Prices are about \$10 above the same time last year.

“So this is something that even adds on top of that,” Sandbakken said.

Those prices, combined with strong crop insurance guarantees, are pushing farmers to consider growing flowers this year. He

said crop insurance prices are at \$32 per hundred-weight for oil sunflowers and over \$40 for confection sunflowers.

But sunflowers won’t be the only crop impacted by the conflict, and Stephen Nicholson, global grain and oilseed strategist for Rabobank, said on a March 1 press call that in addition to producing 78% of the world’s sunflower oil exports on the five-year average, Russia and Ukraine also produce 29% of the world’s wheat exports, 31% of the barley, 19% of the corn, and 23% of the rapeseed, known as canola in North America, he said.

In comparison, the U.S. produced 13.3% of the world’s wheat exports last year, Nicholson said.

The wheat market has been quick to react because of realistic questions about where the wheat in Russia and Ukraine will come from to fill the global needs.

Nicholson said that while neither country holds over much stock and already have shipped out much of the 2021 product, the future remains uncertain.

One thing is certain, Nicholson said: Prices will remain volatile. But he is comparing the situation to that of a drought. Like in a drought, prices will spike, and then will settle back as the markets become accustomed to the new expectations. Even after the setback, he expects prices will be higher than they began.

But how long will it last or how high will the markets go? Just like in a drought, Nicholson said the impact will remain unknown “until we get through it.”

The coming impact

A major question that remains unanswered is whether Ukrainian farmers will be able to put in a crop in 2022 as farmland becomes a battlefield, Nicholson said.

“It’s a challenge putting in a crop any place in the world, let alone in the middle of a conflict,” Nicholson said.

Sandbakken has talked to people in the sunflower business in Ukraine who said that delays in shipping existing supplies will not be resolved quickly.

“What they told me was that, even if all the fighting stopped today, they still would be at least 30 days

away from being able to ship anything,” he said. “And so the longer the conflict goes on, I mean, obviously it’s going to just keep delaying things.”

Customers have been told that if the boats with their products are on the water, deliveries should arrive. But anything that hasn’t gone out yet is questionable.

Sandbakken said whether U.S. sunflower oil producers will see more business remains a possibility. Sunflower oil buyers likely are determining their needs right now.

“But I know that they’re already starting to look for other sources,” he said.

The soy oil markets have increased as soy oil has moved into “markets that are normally some sun oil markets,” Sandbakken said. “And once the world realizes that this is going to probably be a longer term situation, then they’re going to get more active.”

Some domestic customers are becoming concerned about supplies, and Sandbakken said he advised them to let processors know their needs and start booking oil “now, before things do get out of hand, if they do.”

The timing of the conflict is difficult, because northern hemisphere countries haven’t even planted their 2022 crop and thus don’t have any supplies available.

“This couldn’t have

happened at probably a worse time for the oil market, because it can’t recover as quickly,” he said. “So when you look at available supplies, it’s going to have to all come from South America or South Africa, and I’m not certain that they can honestly fulfill that void that’s going to be there by this oil not being available.”

The Rabobank press call, along with discussing impacts on grains and oilseeds, also covered energy and fertilizer availability and volatility.

Ryan Fitzmaurice, energy commodity strategist, and Samuel Taylor, farm inputs analyst, talked about the volatility in oil, natural gas and fertilizer prices and availability. Russia is a major world player in oil and refined products, and Russia and Belarus, which has aligned itself with Russia, are major world players in various fertilizer components. Much will depend, they explained, on the length of the conflict and the way supply chains realign.

Nicholson, speaking mostly about wheat availability, said the markets have a way of filling needs.

“Grain is like water,” he said. “It finds the crack. It finds its way to where it needs to go.”

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- ▶ Custom rates: what to charge for planting, etc.

- ▶ Average farmland rental rates by county from two sources with projections for 2022.

- ▶ Flexible rental agreements and examples of how they work and how they have worked in the past.

- ▶ Fill-in-the-blank lease forms for cash rent and share rent arrangements.

- ▶ Farmland sales information for all counties in Minnesota that list current average agriculture sales.

- ▶ Information on charges for custom feeding, commodity storage, leasing buildings and various bin rental rates, including leasing a dairy barn and machine storage.

- ▶ Current information on pasture rental rates and tree timber values.

- ▶ Marketing information, along with recent cost trends for Minnesota.

- ▶ Commodity price probabilities for corn, soybeans, alfalfa hay, straw, grass hay, hogs and cattle.

- ▶ USDA corn and soybean yields by county to be used for calculating Farm Bill payments.

- ▶ Feedlot rule highlights and information on manure agreement and easements.

- ▶ Manure spreading lease examples and land application agreements.

The Farm Resource Guide is available in the following formats:

- ▶ E-mail: \$25 plus sales tax

- ▶ CD: \$29.00 plus sales tax and postage

- ▶ Hard copy: \$31.00 plus tax and postage

If you would like your own copy of the Farm Resource Guide, e-mail Dave Bau at bauxx003@umn.edu or call 507-372-3900 ext. 3906.

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