

Crop Talk/Market Madness

Five weeks ago we reported that harvest was in full swing. At that time we were not able to get a price sheet out because of so much market uncertainty. We expressed our hopes that one would be forthcoming shortly. Well, it has taken all five weeks to get to a point where we can at least express some level of pricing confidence on most items. Below are just a few points on how crops are shaking out and how the market is reacting.

- Clearly the dry winter, followed by a hot, dry spring and early summer, adversely affected most crops. We don't know yet how bad, but across the board, almost all crops are down 15-30% in yields. Crimson clover and orchardgrass may be the exception.
- There's typically an order as to which crops come off first and which come off late. For example, usually fawn and crimson start the order, followed by annual and orchardgrass, then turf-type tall fescue, etc. This year, while the order was still there, many crops were ready in quick succession. Not only did harvest start early, but it was not hindered by rain. While much of the seed still needs to be cleaned, nearly all the harvesting is done. This is indeed one for the record books.
- The Missouri KY-31 crop yields were essentially cut in half due to untimely rains on the windrows. This drove more buyers to the Oregon crop pushing prices up 30-35% within the past 6 weeks.
- Annual ryegrass prices have risen 25% in the past two months. It has been extremely difficult to price and offer both common and proprietary annual during this time. Simply put, growers want to make a profit and do not want to price their seed today when it could be worth more tomorrow. Now that more seed is cleaned and prices have risen, we hope the situation will get better.
- Interest in cover crop seed continues. Keeping sufficient inventories of peas, radish, vetch, rape, turnips and the like seems to be an increasing challenge.

