



FRONTIER-SERVCO FS NEWS

March 2013

222 East Puerner Street • P.O. Box 359 • Jefferson, WI 53549-0359 • (920) 674-7000 • FAX (920) 674-7013



Division Manager's Report

Back to normal

By Sam Skemp, Division Manager

As I write this, we have had nine consecutive days of snow and several days of below-zero temperatures — quite a change from last winter.

With the cold weather, our propane and liquid fuel departments are going full blast to supply home heat. The drivers are putting in long hours to keep our customers' homes warm and safe.

This winter we have been steady with de-icer salt deliveries, too. We are delivering many semi-truck loads daily to keep up with orders. Needless to say, it has been a very busy January compared to last year.

Financial update

The end of January marks the completion of five months on the cooperative's fiscal calendar for 2012-13. I am very pleased to note that sales are at \$119 million, which is about \$9.4 million ahead of budget.

A departmental sales breakdown and comparison to budget is as follows:

- Petroleum – \$68.5 million, up \$8 million
- Feed – \$6.0 million, even with budget
- Agronomy – \$16.6 million, even with budget
- Grain – \$16.4 million, up \$3.1 million
- LP – \$11.4 million, down \$1.4 million

LP is down due to lower corn-drying gallons used and a warmer October, November, and December. All other departments are on track or ahead of budgeted sales.

Continuing to improve

Two major expansions and other capital expenditures, totaling an investment of more than \$10 million, are under way at your co-op. Each project will help us continue to improve Frontier-Servco FS's rolling stock and facilities.

At the Jefferson facility, we are adding 900,000 bushels of grain storage and a second dump pit. This will give us more storage and the ability to provide faster service during the fall harvest.

The cooperative also purchased the Best Build Garages property next to the Marshall facility. The property is the location of a 2 million-gallon liquid UAN storage tank now under construction. The new tank's capacity will allow us to secure and store product to meet our customers' needs during the spring planting season.

Spring is just around the corner. Be assured that Frontier-Servo FS is ready and willing to supply all your needs as in the past. The products to cover our patrons' needs are secured, and

we have the equipment to get it delivered and applied on a timely basis.

As always, have a safe planting season. Thank you for your support!

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Directory

Amherst Junction
(715) 824-3151

Antigo Fast Stop
(715) 623-6311

Antigo Office/Service Center
(715) 627-4844

Argyle Service Center
(608) 543-3026

Arlington Service Center
(608) 635-2949

Brodhead Service Center
(608) 897-8671

Cobb Service Center
(608) 623-2222

Darlington Service Center
(608) 776-4600

Escanaba Office
(906) 789-0061

Francis Creek Service Center
(920) 684-3322

Green Bay Office
(920) 437-0466

Ishpeming Office
(906) 789-0061

Ixonia Service Center
(262) 567-6509

Jefferson Main Office/Service Center
(920) 674-7000

Mapleton Service Center
(920) 474-4466

Marshall Service Center
(608) 655-3421

Marshfield Service Center
(715) 387-1211

Marxville Service Center
(608) 767-2172

Neshkoro Service Center
(920) 293-4889

Palmyra Service Center
(262) 495-2164

Rozellville Service Center
(715) 387-1541

Spring Green Service Center
(608) 588-7239

Wautoma Service Center
(920) 787-3307

Wisconsin Rapids Service Center
715-423-6280

Expanding petroleum sales beyond Wisconsin



By Kevin Skemp, Petroleum Department Manager

Frontier-Servco FS is based out of Wisconsin, but did you know that a portion of our petroleum and oil sales take place in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan? Acquisitions over the past four years have expanded the co-op's fuel sales territory outside the Badger State.

In 2009, Frontier-Servco FS acquired the fuel tankwagon business from SemFuel. This included bulk fuel storage facilities in Escanaba and Kingsford, Mich., as well as an automated Fuel 24 (Fast Stop Express) site in Escanaba. More recently, Ruusi-Vivian Oil of Ishpeming, Mich., was purchased. This acquisition gives the cooperative another bulk fuel facility and two more Fuel 24 locations.

The combined acquisitions have resulted in the co-op having eight tankwagon routes running out of three bulk locations. Fifteen employees are covering sales and deliveries in the Upper Peninsula. Sales in the territory in 2012 included 8 million gallons of fuel and more than 50,000 gallons of oil. That figure is expected to increase in 2013.

The customer base in Michigan differs from that in Wisconsin. While farming makes up a large portion of the co-op's business in Wisconsin, forestry accounts for the biggest part of Michigan sales. The customer base also includes a tugboat that pushes iron ore barges through the Great Lakes region. This one tugboat uses 1.5 million gallons of fuel and 11,000 gallons of oil annually.

Mining (iron ore, gold, nickel) is another large industry. Frontier-Servco FS employees at the Ishpeming location work with two large mines, one open pit and one shaft.

If your travels take you to Michigan's Upper Peninsula and you see a tugboat on one of the Great Lakes or a truck hauling logs, you now know that it may be powered by FS fuel and oil. If you see a Frontier-Servco FS fuel truck, please honk your horn and wave.



Fuel salesman Joe Briggs is among the 15 Frontier-Servco FS employees working in the Upper Peninsula.

Below: A recently acquired Fast Stop Express on Highway 41 in Ishpeming, is contributing to fuel sales in Michigan.





Purina introduces new forage product

By Lynette Miller, Lifestyle Feeds Specialist

Responsible animal owners know that travel can be very stressful on livestock. The trailer ride, the change of climate, a “new” place, and many other factors can contribute to an animal’s wellbeing and how it reacts to a journey. Water intake may be drastically lowered during times of stress, which can result in poor performance and a multitude of other health concerns. Purina Animal Nutrition has a new product to help promote proper hydration in horses and other livestock, especially animals on the show circuit.

Each Hydration Hay block soaks up five times its weight in water in about 10 minutes.

Purina’s reputation for quality research and development of animal nutrition products holds true with the introduction of Hydration Hay™ Original Horse Hay Block. It is a premium blend of quality, sun-cured timothy and alfalfa hay. This consistent,

quality hay blend is compressed into a 2-pound block that provides a nutritious source of roughage that horses, cattle, goats, and sheep need.

The most exciting benefit of this quality roughage source is its ability to promote water intake by absorbing water in a patent-pending hydration process. This new soak technology allows each Hydration Hay block to absorb up to five times its weight in water in about 10 minutes. Animals can consume roughage and water at the same time, which promotes proper hydration.

Easy and convenient

Hydration Hay is easy to transport. A dozen, 2-pound blocks are bundled in a convenient, easy-to-handle package, so there’s no need to pack and haul large, heavy bales of hay from home.

The Purina product also eliminates the need to bring water from home. It masks the “odd” taste or odor of foreign water sources that can often reduce water consumption while traveling.

Hydration Hay is also more convenient to soak than traditional hay cubes, saving precious time when you’re on the road. In about 10 minutes, the hay block can be completely soaked and expand to about one flake of moist hay. The addition of 4–5 quarts of water in a large bucket is adequate for completely soaking each 2-pound block.

For horses

Purina’s new product is designed to replace a portion or even all of the forage in a horse’s diet. It can replace hay or forage on a 1:1 ratio; each 2 pounds of dry hay can be replaced with 2 pounds of dry Hydration Hay. When replacing all of the forage in a horse’s diet, be sure to feed at least 1 to 1.2 percent of the horse’s body weight in forage (10-12 pounds/5-6 blocks for a 1,000-pound horse), with 2 percent of body weight preferred. Inadequate amounts of forage may lead to colic and other digestive disturbances.

The next time you’re preparing for a trip that includes transporting a horse or other livestock, don’t forget to pack Hydration Hay to promote water intake while away from home. It is convenient, lightweight, and easy to use.

Hydration Hay is a great addition to Frontier-Servco FS’s lineup of feed products. In addition to this new forage product, Purina has also introduced four new equine supplements. Contact your Frontier-Servco FS Feed Specialist today to investigate how these products can benefit you and your animals.



Dropped in water



Ready in 10 minutes

Prep your planter

10 things to check before you hit the field

By Paul Schell, Precision Planting Specialist

Planting season will be here before we know it. I've put together a checklist of important items to help you make sure your planter is field-ready this spring.

1. Is it level? While the planter is attached to the tractor, place a bubble level on the toolbar. If the level points down toward the front of the planter, this is referred to as "running downhill." This will cause no-till coulters to run below seed disks causing a false bottom and increasing germination problems. If the level points down toward the back of the planter, it is "running uphill." This will put excessive force on the gauge wheels and closing wheels and may result in sidewall compaction. In either case, adjust the hitch height and toolbar so the planter is running level for best performance.

2. Bushings and parallel linkage. Stand behind the row unit, lift it up and move side to side. If there is considerable "slop," replace the bushings. After replacing the bushings, lift and move the row unit again. If the movement has not changed, it may be time to replace the parallel arms. The goal is to have as little movement as possible in the row unit. This will reduce the vibration in the meter and seed tube, resulting in better performance.

3. Drive system. Check all chains, including transmission, main drive, meter drive, and insecticide drive. Any chains with kinks or severe rust will cause meter errors or placement issues. For cable drives, remove the cables and manually twist; feeling for any catches in the system.

4. Calibrate meters. Remove the meters and have them tested by a trained professional on a test stand. If possible, bring the seed you will be planting to be run on the test stand. Identify worn parts and replace as needed. A few dollars spent on a test stand to calibrate meters can pay large dividends next season.

5. Double disk openers. Make sure the double disk openers form a good "V" seed furrow. Use two business cards, bringing one from the top and one from the bottom, until they stay in place. Then measure the distance between them. A 1 1/2 to 2-inch distance will provide the true "V". If the distance is greater or less, shims can be added or removed to achieve the desired distance. Also, measure the diameter of the disk. A disk measuring less than 14 1/2 inches should be replaced, and this should be done in pairs.

6. Seed tubes. Look for signs of wear. Tubes with "dog ears" or flaps at the end can cause seed

to ricochet out of the seed furrow. Replace any worn tubes.

7. Closing wheel system. Make sure the closing wheels follow the seed trench evenly. To check this, put the planter down and drive forward a few feet. Look to see if the mark the disk openers made is in the middle of the closing wheels. This is also a good time to check for excessive movement in the closing wheel system. If tightening the bolts doesn't help, a system replacement may be needed.

8. Gauge wheels. With the planter raised, look for large gaps between the gauge wheel and the disk opener. If your fingers can be placed between the two, it's time to replace the bearing or add spacers. If this does not fix the problem, a new gauge wheel arm may be needed.

9. Row cleaners. Row cleaners have one purpose: remove residue from where the seed is going to be placed. Residue left in the row can inhibit emergence, wick away moisture, and add disease to young and germinating seeds. Row cleaners that are too shallow will not remove the residue and can lead to "hair pinning," or pinching residue in the seed furrow. Row cleaners running too deep can remove too much soil, causing the seed to be placed in cool and wet soil. Remember: Row cleaners should run sporadically, not consistently.

10. Seed firmers. Like row cleaners, seed firmers have one purpose: ensure seed is at the bottom of the seed furrow. This will provide the best soil-to-seed contact and improve the even emergence that is critical to maximum yield potential. Check to see if the firmers have enough stiffness to push the seed to the bottom of the furrow. Any worn firmers should be replaced. If you don't have seed firmers, now is a good time to add them to achieve uniform emergence.

Planting is the most important operation you perform each year. This is the time where you establish the environment to maximize your hybrids' full potential. Take the time now to pull the planter into the shop and check the most important parts. Then you'll know it is in the best condition possible for planting. Frontier-Servco FS has trained personnel and two meter stands available to help you maximize your planter's performance. I wish you all a safe spring season.

High fertility does not mean high yields

By Don Majeski, Area Seed Leader

It's true that high fertility and high yields go hand-in-hand, but there are also several hidden yield-limiting factors to consider. From fall tillage to fall harvest the next year, many factors need to be considered to maximize yields for your farming operation.

- **Planter maintenance** — Are furrow openers adjusted and inspected for wear? Are seed firmers broken or worn? Has seed singulation within the row been a concern in the past? Use the handy checklist to the left to assure you've covered the bases.
- **Plant residue management** — Keeping the row clean of plant residue before the furrow disks is a key element to ensuring proper plant emergence and seed depth.
- **Weed management** — Focus on key weed problems from the past. Determine how you'll control weeds such as giant rag weed, lambs quarter, and others.
- **Insect pressures** — In addition to controlling root worm larva (using multiple modes of action in order to prevent resistance), address secondary insects such as wire worm, seed corn maggots, slugs, and white grubs.
- **Harvest loss** — This is not discussed very often, but it can contribute to significant yield loss. Harvest timing, with regards to evaluating stalk quality prior to harvest, is a key factor. Stripper plate adjustments are a must to prevent grain loss at the head.

These are just a few things to consider as we start the new season. Hybrid selection and placement is important, but it is critical to consider other factors that may limit the performance of a hybrid. Discussing these items and working on solutions with your Frontier-Servco FS Crop Specialist is the best way to ensure maximum yield.



A 1920s-era truck delivers fuel from one of the nine local cooperatives that started the FS system.



Together from the beginning

Farm Bureau and FS

By Kristen Rolling, Marketing Assistant

Why do Frontier-Servco FS patrons need a Farm Bureau membership to be eligible for patronage? The answer to this often-asked question lies in the history of the cooperative.

In the 1920s, Illinois Farm Bureau members invested money and efforts into forming local cooperatives to ensure a reliable supply of farm inputs and to maintain ownership and control of their own business. In 1927, nine of these local cooperatives formed Illinois Farm Supply Company, which was the start of the FS system.

Because of its early influence, Farm Bureau is directly responsible for the direction and purpose of the cooperative. They saw a need to provide bulk fuels to farmers, thus the cooperatives mentioned above were created to provide such a service. A cooperative is defined as, "an enterprise or organization owned by and operated for the benefit of those using its services."

Frontier-Servco FS's strong, ongoing relationship with Farm Bureau is not one on paper, but is based on a mutual goal to support and provide for local agricultural communities. It's much like another successful pairing. The alliance between McDonald's and Coca-Cola was (and continues to be) sealed only with a handshake in the 1950s. McDonald's created the concept of the "production line" for food preparation, enabling fast service and consistent product replication. The two companies franchised the restaurant through a common vision. To this day, Coca-Cola remains the exclusive fountain drink provider for McDonald's, the largest restaurant chain in the world. Frontier-Servco FS's relationship with Farm Bureau encompasses a common goal to support and provide for our agricultural communities.

What is Farm Bureau?

Farm Bureau promotes, protects and represents the business, economic, leadership, and educational interests of farmers. This is accomplished through legislative involvement and political activity, public and media relations,

education, and leadership development.

Members of Farm Bureau throughout Wisconsin and Michigan join the organization to support legislative and public relations efforts, to qualify for member benefits, and to support Wisconsin and Michigan's farm families. Members also enjoy benefits, such as vehicle rebates from General Motors or Ford, coverage through Rural or Farm Bureau Insurance, farm supplies through Grainger, and patronage from Frontier-Servco FS. To view a complete list of member benefits, visit Wisconsin Farm Bureau at www.wbf.com and Michigan Farm Bureau at www.michfb.com.

Eligibility for patronage

When the cooperative is profitable, the board of directors decides whether or not to pay patronage and how much will be paid. Patronage is paid on certain products purchased at the co-op during the fiscal year in cash and stock. As this stock is issued, Frontier-Servco FS members become owners in GROWMARK, Inc.

To be eligible for Frontier-Servco FS patronage, you must be:

- an active, voting Wisconsin or Michigan Farm Bureau member as of Aug. 31.
- an agricultural producer.

Examples of agricultural producers:

- Farming – livestock, grain, vegetables, fruit, dairy, Christmas trees, etc.
- Logging
- Commercial fishing

Examples of non-agricultural producers:

- Trucking (includes hauling logs)
- Mining
- Construction/excavation
- Shipping

Become a Farm Bureau member today! Apply online at www.wbf.com or www.michfb.com. Get all of the benefits a Farm Bureau membership provides and help maintain a strong voice for Wisconsin and Michigan farmers.

Getting (your lawn) into shape in 2013

By Tim Gagnon, Certified Turf Specialist

Most of us in the lawn and landscape industry are happy to put 2012 behind us. It was a difficult year to manage with the dry winter, early spring green up, long summer brown out, and no moisture in the fall to help plants recover. With the new year comes a new challenge: re-establishing turf cover in areas affected by the drought.

One problem a drought brings is an increase in weed pressure the following year. In a dry summer the turf will thin, allowing weeds an opportunity to get started. Last season, crabgrass took advantage of our early warm temperatures and long season to produce a large amount of seed. Combined with an already thinned turf canopy, the crabgrass may become difficult to control this year.

Controlling crabgrass is usually achieved through an application of a pre-emergent herbicide applied in late spring. If you intend to reseed and grow new grass instead, the pre-emergent herbicide will harm the desired new seed and would require a different game plan. Here are two options:

Option 1. Seed now, treat later

In the spring when soil temperatures have warmed up to about 50 degrees, overseed your lawn through slit seeding or aerify it, then broadcast seed. Apply a starter fertilizer at the time of seeding for faster establishment and to keep the surface damp, allowing the seedlings to germinate. After you are able to mow the seedlings (roughly four weeks), the new plants are ready for another fertilizer application and are able to tolerate a herbicide treatment. There are herbicides available with post-emergent residual control for crabgrass and other common weeds.

Option 2. Treat now, seed in fall

This option allows you to control weeds in the springtime and seed the affected areas in the fall when warm soil temperatures and cool nights make germination easier. Apply the crabgrass control fertilizer at about the time farmers are planting field crops. You can also fertilize your lawn more frequently to encourage the lawn to "fill in." This option may involve more patience and is better suited for lawns that are thinner rather than ones with large, open spots.

If you are unsure about what products to use, call your local Frontier-Servco FS Turf Specialist. We're happy to answer questions to help you have a healthy lawn in 2013.



Schroeder's LP Gas acquired in Antigo

By Lewis Bowman, Northern Propane Marketing Manager

Frontier-Servco FS is welcoming a new group of propane customers in and near Antigo, Wis., following a recent acquisition.

"Frontier-Servco FS is a respected member of the industry and communities we serve. We strongly believe our customers will have access to a reliable supply of LP and can count on ongoing quality customer service," said Brian Schroeder, speaking on behalf of the Schroeder Family, about the recent sale of Schroeder's LP Gas to the cooperative. The sale coincided with owners Bill and Susanne Schroeder's retirement after 34 years in the retail propane business.

On Nov. 30, 2012, the cooperative officially acquired Schroeder's LP Gas. The company had served primarily residential accounts, along with some agricultural and commercial customers, in a 40-mile radius around Antigo.

The Schroeders chose to sell to Frontier-Servco FS because they wanted to leave their customers with a local company that shared a similar reputation for customer service, Bill Schroeder explained. "There are many similarities between Schroeder's and Frontier-Servco FS, including operating procedures and customer policies," he said to customers. "As life-long members of the

community, we are confident Frontier-Servco FS will meet your needs going forward."

As a part of this purchase, Schroeder's former delivery person, Joe Arrowood, joins the Frontier-Servco FS team. He has 11 years of propane delivery experience and is well known by his customers. His knowledge will help our propane team become more efficient in our delivery efforts, which will ensure that you and your family continue to receive the excellent customer care you know and expect.

Photo: Joe Arrowood brings 11 years of propane delivery experience to his new position with Frontier-Servco FS.

'Be quick, but don't hurry'

By Kevin Frye, GROWMARK Safety Services Manager

I enjoy the books and video teachings of the late John Wooden. He won 10 NCAA national basketball championships in a 12-year period as head coach at UCLA. The title of this article is one of his many quotes I find myself using on occasion as it applies to various issues.

Of course, Coach Wooden initially gave this message to his basketball teams to explain the difference between playing fast and efficient versus being sloppy and careless. It's a fine line, but a clear difference.

My 10-year-old daughter was practicing basketball with her team last week. After chasing down a loose ball, she frantically spun and "shot" the ball, missing the rim by a good seven feet. It does no good to be quick

if it just leads to sloppy results. It was a teaching moment.

This time of year is a high-energy rush for the agricultural industry. Farmers have been chewing at the bit to get in the fields, and it leads to high pressure and long hours for their employees. Now, more than ever, this quote has relevance. Yes, we need to be efficient, but being reckless and sloppy benefits no one and will lead to bad consequences.

This planting season, we beg you to stay safe and encourage you to make "be quick, but don't hurry" your motto. All too often, we need a reminder to take the extra moment to do things right. In the long run, that is what will be successful.



Personality Profile

Name: Dan Wickersheim

Branch, Department: Energy Department – Escanaba, Ishpeming, Antigo and Green Bay locations

Title: Northern Region Energy Marketing Manager

Education: White Lake High School graduate, North Central Technical College

How did you become involved in the FS System? Numerous members of my family worked at FS for many years, so it seemed only natural that I would work here also. I started out as an applicator in the fertilizer department and later had the opportunity to help start the liquid fuel business in Antigo.

What are your job responsibilities? I work closely with our sales force, marketing liquid fuel and lubricants in northeastern Wisconsin and in Upper Michigan.

What do you like most about your job? I enjoy the variety of work and working with our sales team. I like seeing positive results!

Tell us about a recent project: We are in the process of converting a second tugboat over to FS lubricants. These boats freight iron ore through the Great Lakes. Each tugboat consumes between 7,000 and 10,000 gallons of lubricants a year. They also burn between 1 and 2 million gallons of diesel fuel! We also fill a portion of their fuel needs.

Who in the Frontier-Servco FS or GROWMARK system has had an impact on your job? It is difficult to pick out one specific person because a number of people have influenced me. However, over the years, Ed Rader (retired Fuel Department manager) was a positive influence. He was directly involved with getting me started.

If you could change anything about your career, what would it be? Finding a better crystal ball.

How do you spend your leisure time? I enjoy coaching baseball and working with my beef cattle. I like deer hunting with my family. I really like "skyping" (online video chatting) with my two cool grandsons. I especially enjoy my time with my beautiful bride and taking care of the honey-do lists she makes for me.

If you could be anyone for a day, who would you be and why? (Green Bay Packer) Clay Matthews...mostly for his hair!

What's your hometown? What is it famous for? White Lake, Wis., which is famous for Robbins Flooring. They are a manufacturer of hardwood sports floors. These floors are seen in many college, professional, and Olympic arenas! (By the way, we are selling them propane, lubricants, and liquid fuel. They are a full-line customer.)



TODAY:

Dan Wickersheim is the Energy Marketing Manager for Frontier-Servco FS's northern region serving parts of Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

YESTERDAY:

Dan Wickersheim, at right, made his first fuel delivery to these FS customers in 1992. The delivery coincided with the establishment of the bulk fuels department based out of the co-op's Antigo, Wis., branch.





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After a year as dry as 2012, don't get left in the dust. Call your local Frontier-Servco FS facility and get started on your 2013 FS Agri-Finance plan today.

And just in time for spring...

The FS Agri-Finance team welcomes Ben Goeke. He has a wealth of experience in finance in addition to a dairy background. If you live in the former Frontier FS territory, give him a call. Former Servco FS customers can contact Roger Fuller in Antigo for any financing questions.

We know farming. We know financing. We know you.



Ben Goeke
Agri-Finance Specialist
Office: (920) 674-7000, ext. 268
Toll free: (800) 472-3810, ext. 268
Mobile: (608) 575-7506



Roger Fuller
Northern Credit Manager
Office: (715) 627-4844, ext. 120
Toll free: (800) 807-9900, ext. 120
Email: rfuller@servcofs.com