

**AG NOTES**  
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**May 24, 2022**

**WHAT I SEE**

Yes, it rained, finally. It always does. It always rains after a while, and it always ends after a while. Always has, always will.

But we still complain when it doesn't do what we want. Always have, always will. We like to complain, I guess it's because we don't have anything else to say.....

Granny Teague had a thermometer hanging next to her kitchen backdoor. I'll never forget what it said on it. It was and is so true. "As a rule a man's a fool. When it's hot he wants it cool. When it's cool he wants it hot. What it is, he wants it not!"

Think about it. Can we talk about things other than how dry/wet/cold/hot it is? I bet not! What it is we want it not!

**LAWNS**

I saw some really sad looking lawns right before it rained. I'm sure I'll see them again. The grass was brown in some cases, thin in patches showing soil and some erosion on the slopes, a build up of weeds, and just plain pitiful in some cases.

In most all of these lawns the grass was very short. I'm guessing at the three-inch height, or less. With the hot sun bearing down, these grasses had very little chance of thriving.

If you look around at the really nice grass lawns, they are mown at four to six inches, mostly five to six, depending on moisture. Here's the reason for their better condition

When we mow too short, this does several things. It lets in the hot sunshine to heat up the soil and allow for drier conditions. Taller grasses will shade the soil and protect the precious moisture.

The short stubble reduces the leaf surface area, and this reduces the photosynthesis process that the grass uses to feed itself with the energy from the sunlight. So, in order to recover, the plant pulls from its carbohydrate supply stored in the root system to re-leaf itself, and this weakens the root system.

The weakened root system becomes shorter, and this impedes moisture and nutrient uptake. Taller grasses have a stronger root system and can withstand stress better, especially temperature in the 90's and little to no rain. And skipping a cutting or two will allow even more rest and less stress on the plants.

Stressed grasses give way to more competition, and here's where the weeds come in. Many of them are drought tolerant, take up precious space and moisture and nutrients.

Raise the mower height, cut the lawns in synch with moisture, and let these grasses thrive. It would be a good idea to soil test the lawns and check on plant nutrient levels, and weed controls are available when these bad plants get out of hand.

**TOUGH TIMES**

I read some articles in some of the agricultural magazines and they are full of news, some of it bad and some of it good. I am concerned from the farmers perspective, and I hope consumers appreciate the farmers around the world.

Costs of production has increased drastically. We all know what the fuel pumps show when we fill up our vehicles. But farmers are paying thousands of dollars to fill tractor and combine tanks with

fuel and supply tanks on the farms, double last year's prices. Fertilizers are triple what they were last year.

The supply chain is affecting farmers too, with shipping costing more and/or supplies held up in one way or another. Our cattle typically have to be hauled to the feedlots and/or the large processors in order to be able to feed the millions of consumers. Just like the baby formulas that have disappeared from the store shelves, I wonder if we will see that happen to food items that I consider necessary.

It's one thing to complain about our inconveniences, but I wonder about the bigger questions. Will you be able to find what you want to eat, or will there be shortages because fuels were too short to run the tractors to complete planting or harvesting? Will there be enough hay and feed to care for the cows at the dairies and farms across the nation? Will there be enough meat and milk and vegetables to get shipped to our store outlets for you consumers to be able to eat?

My faith tells me that all will be well. But there are some areas of our country that are being really stressed right now. Dry conditions or wet conditions are leading to reductions in production and financial strain. The reality is that times are tough on the farms right now.