



## Fall harvests see slow start, high moisture

By Vera Sloan

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Dee Olson, office manager at Red River Sunflower Plant said the weather has put a damper on the sunflower harvest, but the company are unloading trucks. She said the crop is coming up from Texas and so far looks like a good harvest.

"We probably haven't received more than two percent of the local harvest," she said, "and outside of the hailed acreage, the crop looks good for this fall."

She said there were a couple of fields defoliated to make the harvest early, before the last weeks of rain and mist set in. There was also some production in Colorado that was harvested Wednesday, and with a couple of nice days here, the harvest will resume locally.

"As to length of harvest," Olson said, "it will probably take several weeks. We price on a poundage basis per acre, and it looks like

with the good yields this year there will be an overage."

Audrey Hines, office manager at Cornerstone Ag said their facility received corn from dry land and hailed fields as much as two weeks ago, and depending on where it was located, the moisture was 18 to 20 percent.

Hines said some of the corn has not reached a fully dry and mature state, because the black layer that goes to the bottom of the kernel isn't all the way to the bottom. Those places where the freeze stopped it will have lighter grain than if it was fully finished.

"We haven't received any milo," Hines said, "but a lot of the crop just didn't have a chance to fully mature."

She said the entire corn belt is wet and that has caused the price to come up more than a dollar over the past two weeks. The price of corn was \$3.35 Wednesday at Cornerstone, but under \$2 a month ago.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

The milo harvest in Thomas County has been delayed by this weeks rain. The crop has not yet matured enough and have too high moisture content, currently about 17-18 percent, to be harvested. Some of the crop may have to be swathed and

baled, but Extension Agent Clint Milliman warned farmer that the high moisture could leave acid in the stalks which can be hazardous to cattle.

## Wet weather keeps area crops saturated

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With some hand-harvested samples completed to test for crop maturity, moisture, and yield, Rob Aiken, crop scientist at the Kansas University Research Center, said the dry land corn that was planted early had a moisture content of 16 percent on last Friday. Farmers will be harvesting for real once the ground is less muddy and they can get the machinery in the field without too much soil compaction.

Aiken said that the weighed samples of the dryland performance tests equated to 150 bushels to the acre, making the outlook for dryland corn excellent.

"The irrigated corn was testing at 30 percent moisture on the ninth, and we don't expect it has dried down a lot since, due to the rain and mist since then," he said. "The husks should protect it from some from moisture, but what we actually need is good drying weather. The hard

freeze on Oct. 2 killed the leaves and everything should be drying down now, if the sun and warmer weather will last a while."

He said it generally takes about a week after a freeze for it to dry down good enough to get into the fields. The corn will come out first, before the early planted milo is ready.

Clint Milliman, Extension agent for Thomas County, said most of the farmers who had contracted wet corn to feed lots had filled their contracts, but now some of the corn is too dry to go as wet corn. Feed lots who didn't get their contracts filled are having to pump water into the corn to make it right for packing into the silos.

Aiken said the sorghum crops are actually not ready with a moisture content of around 17 to 18 percent. Since the heads are open, the seed may not be fully extended, or out of the sheath, which can make it susceptible to fungus or decay. He also said that the cool summer has prevented a lot of the milo from forming the



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

The rain earlier in the week also muddied up a lot of local fields, preventing farmers from getting their heavy equipment into the fields. Crop specialist Brian Olson the crops, such as this corn, look to be very high yield as soon as farmers can get to them.

black layer at the base of the seed that indicates fully mature seed that is ready for harvest.

Milliman said the immature milo will have lower test rates, and that some of the fields that are not close to being finished

may have to be swathed and baled. The threat of nitrates with immature milo is not as likely this year due to plenty of moisture. However, prussic acid can

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## Auto dealership to hold re-opening

By Kevin Bottrell

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Colby Dodge, formerly Taylor Motors, has gone through a lot of changes recently, and will be showing them off at a grand re-opening Thursday.

Owner Tuffy Taylor retired and has turned the day-to-day management over to his son-in-law Brandon Booi. The dealership was dropped by General Motors last summer because of the company's financial difficulties.

Things could still change in the near future, Booi said, and GM might be in a better financial position down the line.

"We haven't shut the door on that yet," he said.

Colby Dodge will still be a GM dealership for another year, Booi said, but the company is looking

to move forward and focus on Chrysler's Dodge and Jeep brands. Toward that end, the dealership has changed their name and will be carrying more trucks, including the the heavier 4500/5500-model trucks.

They have added a new parts and service store that will be housed at the dealership. The store will stock parts for all makes and will be able to order any they don't have. Taylor said the dealership will be able to service any vehicle they sell, plus many that they don't.

Booi said the dealership will also be offering 24-hour roadside assistance for the first time and has added a second tow truck. Booi said he would be adding two to three new positions at Colby Dodge and plans to hire locally.

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HOLLY STEPHENS/Chamber of Commerce

Lou Hines of Western Well and Brent Wiedeman of Farmers and Merchants Bank dug the ceremonial first shovelfull of dirt at the ground-breaking event for the Sleep Inn and Suites on Tuesday. They were joined by various community representatives.

## Second new motel begins work

By Kevin Bottrell

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The second new motel in Colby to begin construction broke ground on Tuesday.

The Sleep Inn and Suites will be located on the new section of Sewell Avenue that runs north from Willow Avenue next to Taco Johns. The first new motel, a Hampton Inn, began construction in September.

The Sleep Inn will have 68 rooms on three floors. The rooms will be 12 feet by 28 feet with larger suites on the end of each floor.

Dave Peterson with Inn-Ovation Hotel Group said the company started planning the new motel about

two years ago. Construction began right after Tuesday's ground breaking ceremony, with completion expected in May, depending on winter weather.

It will face west onto Sewell Avenue. Peterson said his company paid for the road construction on the current section of Sewell Avenue, and will eventually extend the road north to Davis Avenue. Peterson said the earth moving will be done by Sporer out of Hays and the building contractor will be Key Construction out of Garden City.

Peterson said the company owns the Days Inn in Hays as well as hotels in Texas, North Dakota, Washington and Michigan. He will start hiring the management team in the next several months and hopes to hire locally as much as possible.

## Briefly

### Legion plans pancake feed

The Colby American Legion Post will hold a pancake and sausage feed from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at the Legion Hall, 1850 W. Fourth St. The cost will be \$4 per person. For information, call Jim Griffin at 269-7074.

### Youth group to wash cars

The Colby United Methodist Youth Fellowship middle school group will be washing and cleaning cars inside and out at from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at Kansas Quick Lube. They will also be selling barbecue bratwurst and hot dogs throughout the day. The proceeds will go to the youth fellowship and the United Methodist Mission and Ministry Fund. For information, call the church at 460-2761.

### Coaches offer coffee, talk

Join the Colby High School football staff for "Coffee with the Coaches" at 9 a.m. Saturday and every Saturday after home and away games at the Sports Shoppe, Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue. For information, call Eagles' Coach Chris Gardener at 460-1390.

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### Learning Center in new home

The Thomas County Learning Center plans an open house from 3 to 6 p.m. Monday at its new location, 485 N. Chickamauga Ave. Refreshments will be served and door prizes given, said Site Director Melinda Fikan. For information, call the center at 465-7900.

### Groups to canvas for food bank

The Colby Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Catholic Youth Organization, Colby Community College track and cross-country team and the college presidential scholars will be trick or treating around town

for non-perishable food for the Genesis food bank from 2-4 p.m. Sunday. If you would like to donate and will not be home, you can leave food in a sack outside your front door. If the weather is bad, the groups will collect food on Sunday, Oct. 25. For information, call Penny Cline at 460-2929.

### Students to give free massages

The Therapeutic Massage Department at Colby Community College plans public clinics on Wednesdays this month in Thomas Hall, room 402. Cubicle massages are 30 minutes and chair massages 15, starting at 6:15 p.m., 7 p.m., 7:45 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Massages will focus on feet on Wednesday and feet Oct. 28. Donations are accepted. To make an appointment or for information, contact Director Debra Waites at (785) 460-5427.

### Heartland plans Fall Festival

Heartland Christian School's annual Fall Festival

will begin with games and supper from 5 to 7:30 p.m. next Friday. Soup will be served for a donation. A volleyball scrimmage will follow from 8 to 10:30. For information, call Deena Bandy at the school, 460-6419.

### Food bank taking applications

Genesis-Thomas County, a Colby food bank, has forms available for county families who will need food baskets this holiday season. Forms can be picked up between 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays at the Genesis office, 350 S. Range Ave. Suite 13. All applications are due by Tuesday, Nov. 10. For information, call Genesis at 460-7930.

