



By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

A presentation by Aurora Co-op's Roger Gordon during the regular monthly meeting of Chamber gave members an update on the agronomy and aviation business which was chosen as October's Chamber Spotlight Business. Gordon, who serves as sales and service coordinator, joined the Aurora Agronomy location in August 2010 just before previous owners Larry and Cathy Hardin went into retirement.

"Aurora is on the move," commented Gordon, who came to the Grant location from Holyoke with many years of ag fertilizer and chemical experience. With customer service as the major focus, Gordon emphasized the importance of serving producers in this agriculture based area. "Customer is king," said Gordon, who likes the small town atmosphere of rural America and working closely with growers.

"People involved in production agriculture provide us with the best and safest food and fiber in the world," he said. "We want to be a part of this lifestyle of rural America."

Focusing on the aerial assets, improvements were made to the aerial department with a full-time manager, John Bleavins, handling the aerial business. Pilot Dave Haddon flies the 802 Air Tractor complete with the latest equipment for aerial application.

A 500,000 gallon tank was added in 2012 and there will be more additions in the future.

The Grant liquid plant is now fully automated to mix and load trucks, said Gordon.

A 120-foot Case sprayer for custom ground spraying and a Case airflow dry fertilizer spreader and support tenders for complete dry application have been added. Along with expansion of concrete and steel have come more employees who are focused on customer service.

"As far as growth, we are blessed with wonderful customers who have tripled our liquid sales, and our first dry fertilizer year was great," said Gordon.

The addition of the retail bulk liquid fertilizer, seed and ag crop protection products to the original Cornhusker Ag business makes Aurora Agronomy very much focused on a full service

program, said Gordon.

"Everything a grower needs, we have," he said.

The company's goal is to continue to bring new products, services and local area information from our Real Farm Research plots to the American farmer that help increase production and a better bottom line for our customers, he said.

The Grant site has nine full-time and up to six seasonal workers. Aurora Co-op in itself has just over 600 employees in nine states with over 40 locations to serve customers.