

December 2025

THE HOUSEHOLDER BULLETIN

The Monthly Newsletter of Leut Services, P.C.

CROP INSURANCE CHAOS

Farmers in the Prairie Pothole Region, specifically the Dakotas, will no longer have the option to purchase buy-up prevent-plant coverage due to a new rule issued by the USDA. This regulation removed the ability for farmers to enhance their prevent-plant coverage, mainly because “the buy-up coverage primarily benefits farmers in the Dakotas aiming to plant in the Prairie Pothole Region, where most prevented-planting crop insurance payments occur.” Prevent-plant coverage is included in every crop insurance policy; however, farmers previously had the option to increase this coverage by 5%-10%. The USDA justified the change by referencing Congress’s historical response to providing ad-hoc payments. Critics argue that these ad-hoc payments can take several years to process before farmers receive the funds. For example, payments for the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program are currently being distributed to address natural disaster events from 2023-2024. Additionally, you may remember the letdown by the FSA when it fell billions of dollars short in providing support for disasters in the 2022 Emergency Relief Program payments. USDA is also ending the “One-in-Four” rule. This rule required land to be planted, insured, and harvested in at least one out of the four past years to be eligible for prevent plant.

A NOTE FROM YOUR *Attorney*

As we wrap up the year and reflect on the projects we’ve completed, the miles we’ve traveled, and the goals we’ve achieved, it’s clear that there is so much to be grateful for. This month’s column’s topic is courtesy of Kellie. Last month, she celebrated her six-month work anniversary-- time truly flies when you are having fun! One day, she came into my office and shared that the “thing” that makes working at Leut Services both enjoyable and meaningful is the **fellowship** we share with our clients. And I wholeheartedly agree. Fellowship can mean many things, but for us it means gathering together for a shared purpose. Our clientele is unique. You keep us on our toes for sure. But unique clients present unique opportunities. Typically, when we stop in for a visit, we know we will need an hour or two because
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BOBCAT V. CATERPILLAR

Bobcat has filed a lawsuit against Caterpillar for patent infringement, claiming that Caterpillar has copied Bobcat's innovations, particularly in skid-steer loaders. The dispute involves 14 patents in issue. Bobcat alleges that Caterpillar analyzed and dismantled products to examine components and replicate CAD drawings. Bobcat claims Caterpillar infringed on Bobcat's patents for "certain skid-steer loaders, compact track loaders, excavators, wheel loaders, dozers, and components thereof." The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas and the U.S. International Trade Commission. Additionally, Bobcat filed suits in a German court and the Unified Patent Court of the European Union. Originally founded as Melroe Manufacturing Company near Gwinner, N.D. Bobcat is now headquartered in West Fargo and operates as a subsidiary of Doosan Bobcat Inc., from Korea. Their skid-steer was initially used in turkey barns and is now used in many industries, according to Bobcat.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR



The Jura

Did you know, "Jura" can mean "oath" in Spanish or "law" in Latin? A match made in heaven.

906 cups of coffee made, thank you
for being so consistent!

(Note from Your Attorney continued)

a good cup of coffee and great conversation await. (*PR stunts are so 1953*). These visits allow us to deepen our understanding of your operations, meet the individuals we assist, and witness the impact of our work firsthand. This engagement enhances the quality of our work by 10-fold. We know that the matters we handle and applications we submit represent much more than paperwork. The efforts we put forth positively affect grandmothers, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and beyond. Our work creates a generational impact. At last month's seminar, I emphasized that the most important rule in business is that *relationships matter*. Those who get it, get it. And those who don't, likely struggle. Developing relationships takes time, and maintaining relationships takes even more time. But the right relationship can pay dividends. From making pierogis to riding in the combine, we have fun but still get stuff done. Although my Saturdays are not as frequently filled with homemade buns and hamburgers, I will never turn down a Colony meal. I have officially visited 80 colonies—and if I haven't made it to yours yet, just know it's on my to-do list. Keep an eye out for our Year in Review at the end of the month. Enjoy a cup of coffee on us if you can guess the total number of miles I've driven this year. 😊 See you in 2026! As always, *Consult Your Attorney,*

Kiera Ledly

MINNESOOOTA? YOU BETCHA.

Kiera recently received her recommendation for admission to practice law in Minnesota. She will be sworn in during December at the Capitol in St. Paul, Minnesota. This means she will be licensed as an attorney in South Dakota and Minnesota. *Where will she be admitted next???*

DID YOU KNOW *with Grandpa Joe*

Blumengard Colony is in Faulk County, South Dakota. It was formed in 1952 and is a daughter colony of Blumengart Colony (MB). Blumengard raises hogs, crops, and has a dairy. Blumengard has two daughters: Evergreen Colony (SD) and Maple River Colony (ND). The bottom picture features Paul Kleinsasser, the former financial boss, in Germany. He traveled there on business as he was a dealer for PFAAF sewing machines. The lady next to him is from Germany, and to the right is the Pr. Joseph Waldner. While Paul was an overseer at Millerdale Colony, he transferred the sewing machine dealership to Millerdale.



Old kitchen at Blumengard



Paul, the German lady, and Pr. Joseph in Germany

MORE FARM PAYMENTS

In mid-November, the USDA announced Stage 2 of the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) would be released to farmers affected by qualifying weather events in 2023 and 2024. Stage 2 will address losses of eligible crops, trees, bushes, and vines not covered under Stage 1, including non-indemnified, uncovered, and quality losses. Additionally, payments will be provided for dairy and on-farm stored crop losses. During the first week of December, Secretary of Agriculture Brook Rollins mentioned that President Trump will soon announce a 2025 "bridge payment" program for farmers.

NEW RULES FOR CAFOS

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources is updating the general surface water pollution control permits for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The two permits under consideration are the state general permit and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. The state general permit is a five-year permit that prohibits the discharge of manure or wastewater into state waters, except for agricultural stormwater. The NPDES permit is also a five-year permit that allows discharges in limited circumstances. Potential updates that permit holders could see include: extending the state permit duration to ten years, adding and refining definitions, revising engineering standards for design, construction, and operation, and updating discharge monitoring and reporting requirements. If you are interested in participating in the rule updates, please reach out to Kiera Leddy.

THE CODE

The Code is back, but this time with a twist. We have adopted a Client Code of Conduct at Leut Services. We run a professional company and expect (or in some cases, challenge) our clients to do the same. Here is Leut Services' Client Code:

1. No yelling.

- This includes emails in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. It comes off as yelling and is unprofessional.

2. Be professional and respectful to all clients and staff.

3. Follow our Shared Values.

4. Pay your bills on time.

- Work done promptly requires timely payment. We have automatic reminders turned on for bills, so if you keep getting emailed a bill, it is because you have not paid it.

The consequences for failure to follow:

1. Written warning.
2. Written reminder.
3. Termination as a Client.

However, if the conduct is egregious (*Example: Having us create fraudulent corporate records*), you will be immediately terminated. For most of you, there will be no change in how you conduct your business. We appreciate you. *"Professional is not a label you give yourself- it's a description you hope others will apply to you."* David Maister



WOTUS REDEFINED

The federal government has announced a new proposed rule that redefines the term “waters of the United States,” or WOTUS, under the Clean Water Act (CWA). This new rule is relevant for farmers because it establishes which waters are governed by various federal programs under the CWA. In 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that WOTUS should include waters that are “relatively permanent” as well as wetlands that have a “continuous surface connection” to these relatively permanent waters. The proposed rules include definitions for “relatively permanent,” “continuous surface connection,” and “tributary.” A public comment period is open before the rule is finalized and becomes law.

SIoux FALLS WANTS MORE AG REGS

During the Executive Board meeting of the Legislature in Pierre, Senate President Pro Tempore Chris Karr (R-Sioux Falls) called for more stringent and “different types” of regulations to address agricultural pollution in the state’s rivers and streams. Council analyst Lance Nixon presented a memo to the Board, addressing pollutants like fertilizers and chemicals from agricultural fields, mercury from coal power plant emissions, and bacteria from livestock waste pose significant threats to the state’s water quality. The memo also raised concerns about Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), commonly known as forever chemicals. Senator Liz Larson (D-Sioux Falls) spoke on the high levels of E. Coli in the Big Sioux River, blaming the issue on livestock waste from upstream sources. Unfortunately, it seems that the use of fertilizers on residential lawns and golf courses did not appear to be a factor in the pollution concerns for these Sioux Falls legislators.

BRAND BOOST

By Kellie Ripp

A well-designed logo does not have to be complicated. In fact, less is more. A logo, short for the Greek word logotype, is a company's visual representation. When designing a logo, several key factors should be considered: visual appearance, simplicity, timelessness, and promotional value. A trendy logo and a visually appealing logo are two different things. Trends come and go like the blink of an eye, which means being trendy is not a long-term strategy. A visually appealing logo is timeless and grows with the company. Simplicity adds consistency. Use one main color, with a maximum of two fonts, to avoid the logo from appearing "too busy." To keep things simple, a graphic or image is not always needed. But, if you choose to include a graphic, use one that complements your business activity and name. This creates a promotional outlet for the company when the logo stands alone. Lastly, make sure the logo maintains its appeal at any size or scale. A well-designed logo looks polished on everything, from a large poster board to a small business card. Need help designing a logo for your business? Leut Services can help! Kiera has a background in graphic design, and Kellie has experience in marketing. We will draft up a few options and send them to you for review. Once the logo is finalized, you will receive the logo in multiple file types, best suited for various optimizations.

UPDATE ON FARM PROGRAM

The One Big Beautiful Bill has introduced mandatory changes to farm program payments. These adjustments include revisions to the ARC guarantee calculation; updates to price references; an additional 30 million base acres; increases in payment limitations; provision of the higher payments between ARC-CO or PLC for 2025; and a requirement for an election for the year 2026. If a producer fails to make an election in 2026, it will default to the 2025 election, and the farm may be ineligible for payments in 2026. Farms with cropping history from 2019 to 2023 are eligible for extra base allocation. These allocations will be based on cropping history, not exceeding effective cropland plus CRP acreage, and will be automatic unless the farmer opts out. The FSA office will be updating farm records to align with these new regulations. Please be attentive and responsive to their requests.

HEY HEY YANKTON

Steve McBee Sr., a reality TV star in *McBee Dynasty: Real American Cowboys*, is currently serving a two-year sentence in a federal prison in Yankton, S.D. (Yes, there is a federal prison in Yankton). His sentence began on December 1, 2025, following his self-surrender. His family traveled the five-hour drive north in an RV to see him off. In 2024, he pleaded guilty to one count of federal crop insurance fraud and was ordered to pay more than \$4 million in restitution. Their farming operation is located near Gallatin, Missouri. On another note, in 2025, there have been at least 25 prison inmate deaths in South Dakota.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Peppermint Meringues

3 large egg whites
Pinch of salt
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
3/4 cup superfine sugar
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
Red food coloring, preferably gel

Position the oven racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven, and preheat to 250°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Beat the egg whites and salt with an electric mixer on medium-high speed in a large bowl until foamy. Add the cream of tartar and continue to beat until soft peaks form. While beating, add the sugar 1 tablespoon at a time. Continue to beat until stiff peaks form. Beat in the peppermint. Fold the top of a pastry bag fitted with a round tip over and down a few inches. Dip a paintbrush in the food coloring. Starting inside the pastry tip, brush a stroke of food coloring from the tip to the top of the bag. Repeat with 3 more evenly spaced strokes. Fill the bag with the meringue; try to spoon it directly into the center so as not to smudge the food coloring (though some smudging is inevitable). Pipe 1-inch-diameter mounds of meringue spaced 1 inch apart onto the prepared baking sheets. Bake until the meringues are no longer glossy and feel light and dry when picked up, about 1 hour. Open the oven for a few minutes, then turn it off and shut the door. Leave the meringues in the oven until they are completely dry inside, about 2 hours. Yields about 42 meringues. *Recipe by Food Network Kitchens*

COLORING CONTEST

Instructions

1. Print out page 7 and color.
2. Write the child's name, colony & age on the page.
3. Email scanned copy to Kellie by Dec. 31, 2025, kripp@leutservicespc.com

*All kids 12 & under are encouraged to participate

Prize: Hot Chocolate Basket

SEMINAR RECAP

Thank you, Joseph Thury, a South Dakota Dept. of Revenue Auditor, for speaking at our Sales Tax Seminar. We had great attendance and beautiful weather. Watch for a date in March for our next seminar!



EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Dec. 16-17 // Kiera's MN Swearing In (Shoffice Closed)
Dec. 24-26 // Shoffice Closed (Christmas)
Dec. 31-Jan. 1 // Shoffice Closed (New Year)
Jan. 6 // Epiphany (Shoffice Closed)
Jan. 8-14 // Kiera Out of Office
Jan. 14-15 // SD Pork Congress
Jan. 21-22 // IA Pork Congress

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Leut Services' Christmas Coloring Contest

