

## Find everything you need at The Country Store



By Brenda Erdahl

There's always something to do outdoors in Minnesota when the weather warms up. It could be a fishing trip that you're gearing up for or a garden project you've been waiting all winter to get started on.

Whatever your plans are this spring, the Lake Region Co-op Country Store (Cenex) in Maple Lake has the equipment you need - from bait, tackle and sporting goods to lawn, garden, animal and bird feed and everything in between.

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"We're like a mini-Runnings or Fleet Farm. People always say we have what they need," Country Store Manager Davis Kautz said.

#### Fishing and hunting

Located just off Highway 55 on the eastern edge of Maple Lake, Cenex is a convenient one-stop-spot for anglers heading north to their favorite fishing hole. The Country Store carries all the major brands of fishing tackle from Rapala to Berkley, plus fishing poles, electronics, life vests, fishing licenses and bait.

Finding bait has grown more difficult over the past few years, but the Country Store makes it a priority to keep its tanks well stocked whether you are looking for shiners, suckers or crappie minnows, Davis said.

Attached to the Country Store is the Cenex convenience store where anglers can get ice, propane and cold beverages to make the trip more comfortable. The deli offers fresh-made hot meals to go, and has specials every day.

To top it off, staff are knowledgeable, friendly and hardworking, and products are priced comparably to larger sporting goods stores, Davis said.

"We're always trying to get the most new and improved products," he added.

Besides fishing gear, the Country Store carries a small selection of hunting supplies including Banks Outdoors deer stands and deer scents. Its deer attractants are also very popular particularly the Frigid Forage and Domain flood plot seed blend brands.

Frigid Forage is developed right here in Minnesota for our climate, Davis said, and it works well for small or large plots. Plant it in the spring and the deer will be there grazing.

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Your best four-legged friend will love the treat buffet at the Lake Region Country Store in Maple Lake. The Lake Region Co-op Country Store (Cenex) is located at 4825 State Highway 55 in Maple Lake. For more information call 320-963-3137 or find them on Facebook.

### ► THE COUNTRY STORE

ing in the fall. Domain is a Wisconsin-made brand and is also gaining popularity.

#### Lawn and garden

If you are more of a gardener than a fisherman, the Country Store has just what you need as well. The store carries everything from grass seed, fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides to mulch, lawn and garden décor, tools, seeds and accessories. While the Country Store doesn't sell plants or flowers, Butterfly Gardens, which rents space on the east side of the Cenex parking lot, does. It's literally become a one-stop-shop for gardeners.

The Country Store also carries Hydrothol 191, the top selling brand of aquatic herbicide.

"We sell quite a bit of that to lake homeowners. It does a really good job getting rid of weeds in the lake," Davis said. He added that staff are well informed about all the products and can give advice on what they think will work best for individual needs and situations.

#### For the Hobbyist

Hobby farms are a rewarding but time-consuming activity, fortunately local hobby farmers don't have to travel far to find all the supplies they need. The Lake Region Country Store in Maple Lake carries cattle, horse, chicken and goat feed, plus bedding, insect control items and an assortment of accessories like

birdals and feed troughs.

If you can't find something you need, talk to staff and they can order it for you, Davis said.

Normally this time of year, the Country Store would be receiving orders for chicks, but because the hatchery they use is so far behind, Davis said new chicks likely won't be available until July or August.

Getting chicks has been a problem since Covid, but this is the worst he's seen it, he said.

If you do get your hands on some chicks, the Country Store has all the supplies you need to raise them.

#### Clothing and Red Wing boots

Cenex also dabbles in clothing and carries a limited number of popular brands, but what they are really known for is their Red Wing work boots.

Red Wing boots are known for their durability and high-quality. They are also a Minnesota made product.

"They are a huge part of our business," Davis said.

The Country Store carries a variety of styles including Red Wing's Irish Setter work, hunting and winter boots for both men and women. Danner is another well-known and respected brand that the Maple Lake store carries. They sell both Danner work boots and Danner Lacrosse hunting and winter boots.



The Country Store carries all the major brands of fishing tackle from Rapala to Berkley, plus fishing poles, electronics, life vests, fishing licenses and bait.

#### Grilling

Short on grilling supplies? The Country Store stocks grilling pellets, charcoals, lighter fluid, grilling accessories like tongs and spatulas plus seasonings including best-selling brands Kinder's and Traeger. You'll also find a few camping supplies, namely propane tanks and heaters.

#### Bird seed and pet supplies

Birdwatching is a popular hobby for many and there's no better place to stock up on all your bird watching needs than the Cenex Country Store. The store carries all types of bird feeders and seed for a variety of birds and seasons. The Country Store also carries an assortment of dog and cat foods/treats for your four-legged friends.

#### Automotive

By no means is Cenex an automotive parts store, but it does offer some basic items for common needs such as ratchet straps, oil and windshield washer fluid.

"We carry a little bit of everything, and we like to try different things to see what sells," Davis said. "As long as it's a good product we'll stick with it."

#### All about the people

It's all about the people at Lake Region Country Store, whether customer or employee.

"We've got great customers that come back year after year that we really rely on. If not for them, we wouldn't be here," Davis said.

Cenex's employees are equally dedicated.

"Our employees are knowledgeable and reliable and they like working here," he said.

Take for instance Ada, she specializes in pets and is a great resource when it comes to deciding what kind of food is right for your animal. Allie on the other hand has lots of experience with chickens while Davis and Tom are available to answer questions about fishing.

Management recognizes their talents and gets them involved in ordering products and organizing them on the shelves. That makes them feel valuable and they stick around.

"It's not just me that makes this place work it's a group effort. There is no 'I' in team," Davis said.



Lake Region's deer attractants are very popular in the spring, particularly the Frigid Forage and Domain flood plot seed blend brands. Plant them now and the deer will be grazing there in the fall.



Now that spring has arrived, The Country Store has all the lawn and garden décor, seeds and accessories you will want for your outdoor projects.



The Country Store carries major work, hunting and winter boot brands, including Red Wing, Danner and Lacrosse.

