

Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company

# PARTNERS IN PRODUCTION

Quarter One | 2015

PAY IT FORWARD





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“OUR MISSION IS TO BE A PROFITABLE, QUALITY  
SUPPLIER OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS & SERVICES”

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FALL HARVEST UPDATE

1/12/2015

	GARDEN PLAIN	NORWICH	RAGO	CLONMEL	CHENEY	BELMONT
Corn (bu)	23,419.64	89,123.21		179,943.93	54,620.71	201,335.36
Milo (bu)	269,417.14	7,770.36		113,430.00	130,020.36	67,,655.36
Soybeans (bu)	109,549.33	45,525.67	21,989.67	112,236.67	100,025.67	1,351.00
TOTAL (bu)	402,386.12	142,419.24	21,989.67	405,610.60	284,666.74	270,341.71

	PRETTY PRAIRIE	VARNER	ADM GRN HUTCH - GP (Direct Ship)	CCGP- GP (Direct Ship)	GAVILON WICH- GP (Direct Ship)	TOTALS
Corn (bu)	93,818.57	69,109.29				711,370.71
Milo (bu)	5,422.14	4,775.00	95,751.07		37,369.64	771,611.07
Soybeans (bu)	215.67	41,198.00	11,897.33	122,527.00		566,498.01
TOTAL (bu)	99,456.38	155,082.29	107,630.40	122,527.00	37,369.64	2,049,479.79

CORN: 711,370.71 bu  
MILO: 771,611.07 bu  
BEANS: 566,498.01 bu

TOTAL BUSHELS  
2,049,479.79

PAY IT FORWARD

Terry Kohler



Pay it forward! That is an expres-  
sion you have probably heard  
before; it describes the beneficiary  
of a good deed repaying the good to  
others instead of the original bene-  
factor. The concept is old, but it has  
been brought back to light lately.

How many people help us  
out each and every day in both  
small and extraordinary ways, and  
we really don’t take time to realize  
or appreciate the good being done  
for us? The good deeds could be in  
many forms such as information sharing, services provided,  
a helping hand when you are sick or out of commission, or  
even someone taking a few minutes from their busy day to  
visit and catch up.

In this quarter’s newsletter, we will share with you  
information that we hope can add to your operation in a  
positive way. We have employees at the Farmers Coop that  
share a large part of their working career with serving the  
membership and “paying it forward” to each of you whether  
through knowledge and information or service and perfor-  
mance. We hope every day we provide you with something  
that you feel is a benefit to you or your operation.

During the 2014 year, the Farmers Coop had three  
long-time employees retire. For many years, they have  
shared their talents with the patrons, and now they have re-  
cently decided to take a different path in their life. This path  
is hopefully more relaxing than the daily workplace grind.

We are sure they will enjoy kids and grandkids with more  
leisure time than before. It is “their” time now to enjoy and  
spend it where they want.

Jacque Bolinger shared 28 years of her life with the  
Coop, George Batt shared 24 years when he retired in May,  
and Jim Kitchen shared 21 years. The Farmers Coop has lost  
73 years of experience in one year with the retirement of  
these three individuals! We sure appreciate them and wish  
them the best in retirement. They have given a lot to the  
members and customers of the Farmers Coop.

It doesn’t just stop at the local Coop, of course; there  
are great people out there that are paying it forward each  
and every day. Gerald “Jerry” Stuhlsatz will be retiring soon  
from UPS after almost 32 years of service to you. Jerry has  
served us with his kind and considerate demeanor through  
many of those years with no fanfare needed. He has brought  
us important documents, necessary daily operational items,  
birthday or Christmas presents, and who knows what else  
always with great service and a genuine smile.

Don’t miss a chance to thank Jacque, George, Jim, or  
Jerry and other important people in our daily lives—even the  
people we that may live with us! There are many people that  
sometimes we really don’t give enough credit to and deserve  
a little recognition. Paying it forward doesn’t necessarily  
need to be big—it just needs to be sincere.

People are so important to organizations, companies,  
and quality of life. They can fill our day with joy and infor-  
mation. Give credit where credit is due! Have a great 2015,  
and pay it forward!

2015 NOMINATING COMMITTEE FORMED

The nominating committee for the 2015 Annual Meeting has been formed for the purpose of seeking nomi-  
nations to fill the two positions for the board of directors. The positions currently held by Jon Kerschen and Ron Si-  
mon will expire this year. Ron will be eligible for another term if elected; however, Jon has served three, three-year  
terms and will have to retire from the board for at least one year.

If you are interested in running for a Board position, please contact one of the members of the nominating  
committee: Chad Basinger, (620) 532-1581; Kenton Rosenhagen, (620) 532-1653; or Max Wells, (316) 393-1780 before  
February 10, 2015. Potential board members can still be nominated from the floor at the Annual Meeting set for Sat-  
urday, February 28, 2015, but they will miss the opportunity to have their name and biography in the mailed invita-  
tion for the Annual Meeting.

Also, if anyone is interested in being an associate director, please contact one of the board members. The as-  
sociate director sits in and is involved in the discussions at the board meetings but is not allowed to cast a vote. This  
is a great opportunity to be introduced to the business of what a director is required to do.



# DECISIONS, DECISIONS

Doug Scheer

Still undecided on what you should plant on your open ground this spring? What questions need answered before you can make this decision? Ideally, you have already made this decision last spring and planned accordingly. Many different factors come into play and must be taken into consideration when making this decision, but be warned you may not find a clear answer. Instead, look at what best fits into your management practices not only now, but also in future crops. Some issues that need to be considered are previous crop, weed problems, fertility, insurance return, and commodity pricing.

To begin, one of the first questions to consider is what was your previous crop? Will I have herbicide carryover? Or has there been adequate rainfall and enough time elapsed to allow for decomposition of the chemical? Some chemicals have long residual activity meaning that they can remain active in the soil for long periods of time which could have a negative impact on future crops. For example, if wheat is treated with Maverick for cheat control, the plant back interval for grain sorghum is 22 months. Also, if a Clearfield wheat is sprayed with Beyond herbicide, it can be planted back to any soybean or Clearfield sunflower, but not to sorghum or corn. Many of these herbicide restrictions exist, so if you are unclear on what your restrictions are, contact one of your team members at your local Farmers Coop, and we will be glad to help.

Have you had trouble controlling a specific problem weed in your field? Most of us are well rehearsed with the problem that Palmer Amaranth (pigweed) has caused in many fields the past few years due to its resistance to glyphosate herbicide. Because of this, we are forced to employ a herbicide with a different mode of action to enable it to be able to control this very competitive weed species. This is where we must look at the similarities of the problem weed with the crop species. Since Palmer Amaranth is a broadleaf species, it is very difficult to control in a soybean crop since soybeans are also a broadleaf plant. Even though we do have some pre-emergent herbicides on the market that do a significant job of controlling pigweeds, its level of control is somewhat weather dependent, and if optimal conditions do not follow, our control of the

pigweed may be compromised leaving us little to no options for control and potentially causing devastating yield loss. By using a grass crop species such as corn, it opens many new doors to the arsenal in the fight against pigweeds since many herbicides that are selective to combat broadleaves have little to no effect on the grass species.

Carryover fertility is another point to consider. Legume crops such as alfalfa or soybeans are known to produce more nitrogen than they use; therefore, they give us a nitrogen credit. This nitrogen, in a sense, is free for us to use since it is residual nitrogen that we did not have to apply commercially. For example, if you had a field in alfalfa for several years, and it is beyond its productive



potential, it may be time to rotate back into a cropping system. In this case, a crop such as sorghum or corn would be a much better choice than soybeans since they would be able to benefit from the nitrogen left behind more so than beans that have the ability to synthesize their own and use very little nitrogen from the soil. Nitrogen is a very water soluble nutrient, and if it is not used in a relatively short time, it can leech too deep into the soil profile for the following crop to use.

Another issue to take into consideration is residue management if I am going to rotate this particular field back to wheat. Will it be winter fallow following harvest this year? Due to a lack of heavy residue to dispose of in order to prepare a good seed bed and ensure good germination of the wheat and get it off to a good start, many producers have found that it is much easier to double crop wheat behind soybeans.

If you try to follow corn or sorghum with wheat, it can be done, but it may require considerably more time to prepare the seed bed to ensure good seed to soil contact due to the large root mass of corn and sorghum.

Finally, many producers tend to look at commodity prices and insurance returns before considering anything else. I tend to disagree with this reasoning unless you are certain that this will be your last year of agricultural production. Although both of these are important for us to be able to keep producing another year, we also need to look toward the future. Just because a particular commodity is priced high in the market today, this doesn't mean that it will be high tomorrow. Consideration of

market trends and market outlooks can help with this decision, but I feel it is necessary to develop a multi-year cropping plan and try to stick with it. A good cropping plan can help you plan ahead and save many input costs by allowing you to take advantage of prepay discounts on seed and fertilizer, plan herbicide applications so as not to damage a following crop due to herbicide carryover, allow careful planning of crop rotation to benefit yourself with nutrient carryover, and maximize control of hard to kill weed species by changing modes of herbicide action.

Finally, I have included a chart based on a spreadsheet

I have that compares the three common spring planted crops for our area. This spreadsheet is available to all of you on request, and it is able to be modified and personalized to fit your specific management. It can also be modified to fit changes in fertilizer and herbicide choices. The yields that I have incorporated are to net a profit of approximately \$100 per acre (not including planting, ground preparation and labor costs due to the fact these costs will vary by operation). If any of you would like a copy of this spreadsheet, e-mail me at doudgscheer@gardenplaincoop.com with your request, and I will be happy to send it to you. Although commodity pricing is down a little from previous years, remember the best way to offset lower prices is NOT to cut input costs, but to increase management and produce higher yields. Profit is measured by yield minus cost, but generally a cut in input will not result in a higher profit because yield is also reduced.

SOYBEANS	
SEED	\$70.00 unit
Plant Population: 120,000	\$60.00
FERTILIZER	
0 lbs 46-0-0 @ \$445.00 ton	\$0.00
40 lbs 10-34-0 @ \$600.00 ton	\$35.29
Custom Application	\$5.25
HERBICIDE	
24 oz. Cornerstone	\$8.50
4 pts. Authority	\$32.00
Custom Application x 2	\$10.50
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$151.54
GROSS INCOME	\$252.18
Averagee Yield	27 bu/ac.
New Crop Bid	\$9.34 bu.
NET INCOME/ACRE	\$100.64

CORN	
SEED	\$290.00 unit
Plant Population: 20,000	\$72.50
FERTILIZER	
100 lbs 46-0-0 @ \$445.00 ton	\$48.37
50 lbs 10-34-0 @ \$600.00 ton	\$44.12
Custom Application	\$5.25
HERBICIDE	
24 oz. Cornerstone	\$8.50
5 pts Degree Xtra	\$25.00
Custom Application x 2	\$10.50
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$214.24
GROSS INCOME	\$316.23
Averagee Yield	83 bu/ac.
New Crop Bid	\$3.81 bu.
NET INCOME/ACRE	\$101.56

SORGHUM	
SEED	\$190.00 unit
Plant Population: 40,000	\$10.86
FERTILIZER	
100 lbs 46-0-0 @ \$445.00 ton	\$48.37
40 lbs 10-34-0 @ \$600.00 ton	\$35.29
Custom Application	\$5.25
HERBICIDE	
5 pts Degree Xtra	\$25.00
Custom Application	\$5.25
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$130.02
GROSS INCOME	\$230.58
Averagee Yield	63 bu/ac.
New Crop Bid	\$3.66 bu.
NET INCOME/ACRE	\$100.56

# NEWS FROM THE FEED STORE

Joe Krehbiel

First of all, I would like to thank you for your business in 2014. We have experienced a tremendous growth in feed sales within the last year. Great cattle prices have helped, but I can't help but think that Farmers Coop went to the next level by hiring an LPS (livestock production specialist). Farmers Coop "paid it forward" by having him on your doorstep to offer his experience, advice, and help with the latest in feed technologies and trends. Thanks to you, the customer, for allowing this to happen.

We all hope that lower feed costs and higher cattle prices will continue, but if not, the need for a feed consultant will be even more important. Making a good profit in tough times requires more help than when things roll easy. Farmers Coop will be here to help no matter where the markets fall.

The biggest thing we can "pay forward" at the present time is mineral pricing. Purina is offering us good discounts on prepay, preorder mineral booking. Do some figuring on your spring and summer mineral needs, and we will gladly pass these discounts forward to you. Give us a call for details.

Give us a chance on all your farm supply needs: Ritchie waterers, water hydrants, water tanks, feed bunks, bale feeders, posts, wire, panels, gates, vet supplies, and much more. We do carry a large inventory.

No one knows what 2015 will bring, but you can be assured that we will be here with the best products, prices, and advice to help you through. Thanks again for a great 2014.



It's that time again. The Tony Bergkamp Scholarship information and applications have been sent out to the area school counselors, and the application is also available on our website at [www.gardenplaincoop.com](http://www.gardenplaincoop.com). All applications need to be turned in no later than February 6, 2015.



# TAKING ADVANTAGE OF 2014 FARM BILL

Doug Bates

Winter is the time for meetings. I, like many of you, have been going to various meetings with a wide range of topics. Most of the meetings I attend are centered around agronomy, but I have been to a couple that concern themselves with the new farm bill with the most recent being at the Sedgwick County Extension Office where the main presenter was Dr. Art Barnaby from Kansas State University. His presentation provided several examples and scenarios entered into the KSU AgManager farm bill spreadsheet. After entering your information, the spreadsheet will calculate what a producer might expect if he signed up for one of the various programs available. We have several decisions to make, in the next few months, and we as producers need to take full advantage of the opportunities we have been given.

Producers have a chance to reallocate base acres. The opportunity to do this does not come around often, and unless you are growing the same thing that you were in the 1990s or, like me, are a relatively new producer, your base acres should change to better reflect your farming operation.

Producers can also update payment yield. If your yields are better than they were the last time we had this opportunity, then it would be beneficial to you to make those changes. The losses will be calculated with base and yield numbers that you provide the FSA depending on which program that you sign up for.

- This is a one-time sign up for the minimum-5 year farm bill. (I'm sure politicians will agree with each other fully the next time it comes up to implement a new farm bill.)
- Find and use one of the calculators to help you make the best decision for your operation. Kansas State has one as well as Texas A&M.
- Talk to the FSA office in your county not only for information, but also to set up a time to enroll.
- Don't wait until the last week to make decisions or sign up.
- Go to meetings. It was stated that for most people, it has taken three meeting to finally start getting their arms around this complicated farm bill.
- Communicate with your land owners.
- Actually sign up! If you don't sign up, you will automatically be enrolled in the PLC election and forfeit any payments due the 2014 crop year.

## 2014 FARM BILL DECISION MAKING STEPS

*presented by Kansas State Farm Bill Team*

### STEP #1 DETERMINE IF YOU CAN UPDATE PAYMENT YIELD

**Decision to be made:** Update Payment Yield to 90% of 2008-2012 average farm yields OR retain current Payment Yield. Decision can be made separately for each commodity with base acreage.

**Strategy:** If you can prove that the current yields on your farm are higher than your established FSA Payment Yield (listed on letter sent in August), you should update them. These are used in the Price Loss Program (PLC) of the 2014 Farm Bill, so a higher Payment Yield will increase your PLC payments, if they are triggered. Even if you choose Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC), you should still update your payment yields because they will stay with the farm for future Farm Bills.

**What is needed:** You will need to certify your 2008-2012 yields with FSA for each covered commodity, for each farm serial number. You are subject to spot checks, so these yields need to be verifiable with crop insurance records or other documentation. Your updated Payment Yield will be calculated as an average of yields from 2008- 2012, including substitute yields in years of catastrophic yield losses.

**Timeline:** You can update Payment Yields with FSA through February 27th, 2015.

**More Information:** Read "Updating Payment Yield" publication on Farm Bill page of [www.AgManager.info](http://www.AgManager.info)

### STEP #2 DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO REALLOCATE BASE ACRES

**Decision to be made:** Retain current base acres or reallocate to average plantings from 2009-2012. You cannot build base acres, just reassign them to different proportions of the covered commodities you are growing.

**Strategy:** Although this is step #2, the decision should be made along with Step #3. There are two ways of looking at this decision.

- **RISK MANAGEMENT:** If you want your potential program payments to match the commodities that you are actually planting, you would reallocate, assuming what you planted in 2009-2012 is similar to your crop rotation going forward.
- **PAYMENT MAXIMAZATION:** Choose which base (current or reallocated) that you anticipate to receive the highest payments for the life of the Farm Bill. This is not easy to do. Use the decision tool to help you evaluate (on [www.AgManager.info](http://www.AgManager.info))

**What is needed:** FSA already has your reported plantings from 2009-2012, which will be used to calculate your average plantings for reallocating base.

**Timeline:** You can reallocate base acres with FSA through February 27th, 2015.

**More Information:** Read "Reallocating Base Acres" publication on Farm Bill page of [www.AgManager.info](http://www.AgManager.info) and go through OSU-KSU Decision Tool or other decision aid.

### STEP #3 SELECT FARM BILL PROGRAM(S)

**Decision to be made:** Price Loss Coverage (PLC) or County Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC-CO) for each commodity-OR- Individual Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC-IC) for entire farm

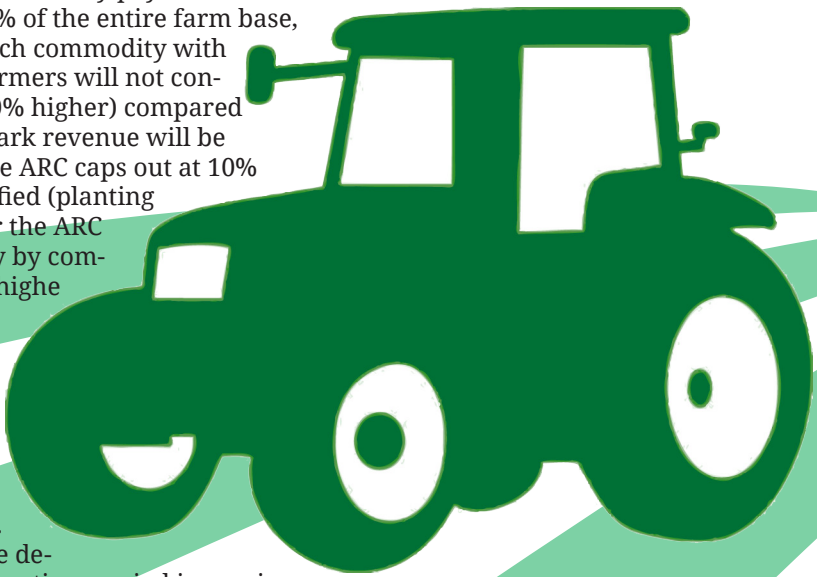
**Strategy:** There are many issues to think about when selecting a farm program.

- **RISK MANAGEMENT:** If you are worried about catastrophic price loss, PLC will offer the most risk protection. It does not cap out until \$125,000 (\$250,000 with spouse) per year and will pay when Marketing Year national prices are below the reference prices set for the life of the Farm Bill. ARC provides protection for revenue losses (losses in price and/or yield) but caps out at 10% of benchmark revenue. It also has a 14% deductible before it kicks in, so only losses from 76% to 86% of benchmark revenue are covered. To hedge your bets, you may consider putting some commodities in PLC and some in ARC-CO.
- **PAYMENT MAXIMAZATION:** You have to estimate the likelihood of payments under each program, as well as the potential payment amount to determine which program will have the most benefits over the entire life of the farm bill. Look at long-term projections for national Marketing Year prices and consider your own price forecasts. If you think national prices will be lower than PLC reference prices in several years, choose PLC because it could pay out more often and in greater amounts than ARC. If you think the combination of national prices and county yields will be the lower than the benchmark revenue for your county in several years, choose ARC as it likely pay more often.
- **ARC COUNTY VS. INDIVIDUAL:** ARC-IC only pays on 65% of the entire farm base, where PLC or ARC-CO pays on 85% of base acres for each commodity with base. This is a large difference to overcome, so most farmers will not consider ARC-IC. Farmers with very high yields (at least 30% higher) compared to the county yield may consider ARC-IC since benchmark revenue will be higher. This will create larger payments per acre before ARC caps out at 10% of benchmark revenue. However, if the farm is diversified (planting many different covered commodities), they may prefer the ARC at the county level, since losses will be paid commodity by commodity. Losses in one commodity will not be offset by higher revenue from another, which could happen in ARC-IC.

**What is needed:** You will need to elect a program with FSA, which you will be locked into for the life of the Farm Bill. You will need to enroll each year to verify you are still farming and are eligible for payments.

**Timeline:** You can elect a program through March 31st, 2015. If you fail to do so, you will give up any 2014 payments and be defaulted to PLC. Enrollment will occur after this, and in a similar time period in coming years. The timeline for enrollment will be announced at a later time.

**More Information:** There are many publications on Farm Bill page of [www.AgManager.info](http://www.AgManager.info) including the OSU-KSU Decision Tool and announcements on upcoming educational meetings.





# Changing for the Better

Brad Scheer

To quote a line from the 2000 movie *Pay It Forward* starring a very young actor, Haley Joel Osment, “I think some people are too scared, or something. I guess it’s hard for people who are

ney, whose teacher gives him an assignment to put into action a plan that will change the world for the better. Trevors’s plan not only works, but escalates much further than what anyone could have imagined. He calls his plan “Pay It Forward,” a charitable program based on the networking of good deeds, which means the recipient of a favor does a favor for three others rather than paying the favor back.

This got me thinking: what are we doing here at the Coop to change your farming operation “for the better”? What can we do differently to make these changes for the better? I started making notes of some of the Coop’s strengths that benefit your operation and some things as a com-

pany we focus on.

## Employees

Do we have the right employees in the right place so that we can utilize them to their maximum potential? We are very fortunate with the group of employees we

have on staff at Farmers Coop. We have very qualified people in all our departments that can make a difference for your farming operation. This service can sometimes get overlooked in this price competitive world we live in today. Is price important to our customers? Of course it is, and we understand that we need to be competitive, but at the same time, we don’t want our services we offer to our customers to get overlooked. We hope that our producers find the worth in knowing that we are there to help in all facets of your farming operation.

## Stop Trying to be Better

So much focus can be on how we can be better than our competitors: better product, better service, better price. Sometimes, what we really need to focus on is how we can just be different than the competition. Don’t get me wrong; we will always focus on offering the best products and services to our customers, but what is it about the Coop that makes us different from our competition? What are we doing just like our competition that we could change to make us stand out from others? This is something we will focus on—being different—and it will lead to better things for you and your operation as well.

## Look to the Future

Will we ever really know what the future of our coop will look like? My answer is no, but we have to be proactive in our efforts and look at any and all opportunities to grow our business and mold it into what we think it should be in order to be successful. Those that are happy to stay “as is” are going to be less successful than those companies that plan for growth. This growth will in turn lead to better opportunities for you and your farming operation as well. This applies not only to the Coop but to your farming operation as well. Just as we need to look to grow our business, you also need to look for ways in which you can grow your operation to assure that you prepared for the future.

There is no certainty what the future will look like, not only for the Coop, but for your farming operation and agriculture as a whole. All we can do is focus on what this company’s goals are and do what we can to make any changes for the better of your farming operation and the Coop. Thank you for your business, and good luck in 2015!

Jon Kerschen

# GRAIN for GROCERIES

Charitable Food Donation for the Hungry in Sedgwick County

We have thousands of hungry mouths right here in Sedgwick County. Especially in winter months, these children and adults are thankful for the many good people of Kansas that donate their time and treasure to help keep their stomachs full! You can help out the hungry in Sedgwick County in a very special way! Donate tax-free to the Kansas Food Bank through your Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association’s very own Grain for Groceries program. After donating, the value of your gift will be doubled by Monsanto through the Invest an Acre program! Now is an amazing opportunity to donate while Monsanto will double your gift! Anyone who files a schedule F with their tax return may be eligible for tax-free donations of grain. If you do not file a schedule F, you certainly can still donate, and may be able to itemize this charitable gift.

Always consult your professional tax or legal advisors to determine tax implications prior to making a gift of grain.

Your gift will go only to the hungry in Sedgwick County that need it most; and, yes, the value of the grain will be doubled after donation! Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association only facilitates the program and has no gain from any donations. 200% of the value of grain donated goes directly to the Kansas Food Bank for the hungry specifically in Sedgwick County.

Simply request that a number of bushels be transferred to the Grain for Groceries account at your local elevator. If you want to confirm your gift was received by the Kansas Food Bank, please email or mail the requested information on the form found on our webpage ([sgfb.org](http://sgfb.org)) or at your local elevator. Confirmation is not necessary to make a donation. =Thank You!



## FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The board of directors has been busy closing out one year and trying to plan for the upcoming one. There are many items that the board has to consider as the year comes to a close. The board reviews the company’s financial statements monthly, and as we neared the end of the year, the board felt confident enough in the earnings to authorize the retirement of the year 2007 equity. The board has been committed to returning earnings back to the members and takes pride in keeping the deferred patronage as current as possible. Also at year end, the board was able to sell some long grain, which will help to boost the bottom line and return some additional patronage back to the producers. Good facilities and employees help keep the grain stored in good condition and therefore allows for the accumulation of long grain.

As the board prepares to move forward into 2015, there is a lot to consider in order to best continue to serve and meet the needs of the patrons as well as remain profitable. The board will devote some time in January for a planning session. This planning session allows the board to look forward, determine a plan, and set goals for the next several years. It is important to be able to plan for the future, but as all of you know, mother nature usually has the last word.

The board would like to thank you for your support of the cooperative, and we will continue to try to serve you as best as possible in the coming year. We look forward to seeing you all at the annual meeting in February.



# A GRATEFUL FAREWELL

## to Jim Kitchen & Jacque Bolinger



## Thanks for the Memories

Jacque Bolinger

I started working at Farmers Coop Elevator, Garden Plain, March 16, 1987. Terry Kohler, one of the youngest general managers in the state at that time, had been manager of the Coop for three years. Larry Werner and Les Koester were there to meet and greet as well as many other employees!

When I was hired, the Coop had just added the grain software program. Rose Kramer welcomed me and helped me learn the system, and we became good friends then and now. Prior to that, grain had all been put on ledger sheets by way of individual postings on a huge posting machine. We continued to keep patron fertilizer inventory on these ledger sheets and billed fertilizer out by hand. Thank gosh for software programs that catered to the ag business!

Through the years, we added different locations. I will never forget when Norwich, Anness, and Rago were purchased from Garvey Grain around the first part of June 1994. Now that was interesting to say the least! Right before harvest! All new patron accounts and grain accounts had to be added to our system. Scale tickets were still hand posted into the computer. Wow, what a summer! We continued to acquire more locations, Farmland Industries went under, Co-Mark became our grain and fertilizer merchandiser, and we merged with Cheney in 2000.

Technology was the sign of the times through the years and many software changes were made. Farmers Coop Elevator having their own website, grain market messaging, and patron access are just a few of the changes and upgrades we saw with technology. I would just get used to something new being added to our software, and then Brad or Susie would change it on me! My duties in all these changes went from inputting grain and a little bit of this and a little bit of that to payroll/human resources administration and patronage & equity with still a little bit of this and a little bit of that. Paper work, paper work, paper work!

Farmers Coop Elevator has been a wonderful organization to work for. I know that all the changes I have seen have been for the betterment and growth of Farmers Coop Elevator.

Many employees, directors, and patrons have come and gone that were dear to my heart, and many will always remain lifelong friends. The Coop has been through the ball games, graduations, and weddings of my three children that now have their own families. My husband, Van, still farms south of Cheney and has a lot of ideas as to what my retirement should be. Sorry "Dear," I win! I love retirement and hope to attend lots of Cheney Cardinal and Garden Plain Owl activities (grandchildren in both school systems). Hope to see you all at the annual meetings or just around.

Take care and thanks again for the memories!



## Jim Kitchen

Nancy Proctor

Jim Kitchen was hired by Dave Smith and starting working for Cheney Coop in 1993. To start off, he worked at the TBA Service Center; eventually, he went to part time there and part time fuel delivery driver. After a few years, Jim then started driving the fuel truck full time, but when he was not busy with that, he helped at the Cheney elevator, in the feed mill, or driving a tender truck.

Since 2000, when Garden Plain and Cheney merged, he has been the full time fuel delivery man until now. Jim has delivered fuel to the area farmers and even spoiled them a bit by filling tractors and combines during the busy times.

He said the hardest part about leaving is that he will really miss seeing all of the customers that he has served for many years. We truly appreciated all of his years of service with the Coop and wish him the very best in his retirement. (And on a side note, Jim usually had the coffee ready by the time I got to work, and I always appreciated that--I kind of miss it, too!)

# Best Chance Survival

James Renner

With the 2014 season behind us, it is time to start looking ahead and planning for your 2015 crop production. None of us know for certain what the next few months will bring, nor can we see into the future, but we all have the ability to plan for the future. Preparing for the future with unforeseen outcomes is not a foreign concept but is easier accomplished by better planning. You want to give your crops the best chance at surviving tough conditions with the best nutrient packages possible for the best growth potential all while hoping that Mother Nature is kind.

Wheat top-dress is here, and hopefully you have or are planning to making arrangements to have your wheat fertilized and/or herbicide applied. Spraying Olympus or Powerflex HL to control cheat will resume in late February through March depending on the weather and just how fast the cheat starts to regrow. Spring application of a cheat herbicide is typically about a three week window, so make plans now to help us prepare for the coming season.

Spring will be here before we know it, and for those that are planning to no-till, minimum tillage, or even conventional tillage, it is paramount to stay ahead of the weed pressure because rain or no rain, the weeds will be there. The use of a pre-emergent herbicides with Roundup Ready seed technology is one tool that

is absolutely critical when it comes to staying ahead of weed pressures. Pre-emergent herbicides will help to facilitate enhanced management of the weed populations in your fields. Although you are planting Roundup Ready varieties, a pre-emergent can help provide effective weed control early. Targeting weeds early translates to better plant development and less competition with troublesome weeds down the road. This past spring we saw excellent results when a pre-emergent herbicide like Authority or Valor products was applied to many of the soybean fields in our area. A pre-emergent herbicide allows time between sprayings while hoping to reduce competition early. Also, if you are planting Roundup Ready corn, a pre-emergent followed with a post application later works great and gives you different chemistries while providing residual control. Remember, a pre-emergent herbicide requires incorporation by either rainfall or mechanical incorporation. If adequate moisture is not received in a timely manner, pre-emergent herbicide control will be reduced.

To close, it is very important to keep in mind that when trying to control tough weeds, you need to focus on breaking that particular weed cycle, whether it is through crop-rotation or using different chemistries to achieve your goals and help to prevent chemical resistance to weeds.



## Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company

1-800-525-7490

316-542-0463 (fax)

## Location Phone Numbers

Anness: call Clonmel

Belmont: 620-297-3911

Cheney: 316-542-3181  
1-800-525-7490

Main Office: 316-542-3182

TBA: 316-542-3381

Clonmel: 620-545-7138

Garden Plain: 316-535-2221  
1-800-200-2122

GP Feed Store: 316-535-2291

Grain Market: 316-531-2681

Kingman: 620-532-2662

Murdock: call Cheney

Norwich: 620-478-2272

Pretty Prairie & Varner: 620-459-6513

Rago: call Belmont

## SEEKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Do you have a great photograph that you would like to share with *Partners in Production*? We are looking for photographs to feature in upcoming issues. Photographs can be of your operation, a great farming moment captured on film, a stunning landscape, animals in nature, or anything that relates to agriculture, production, or our beautiful area. Submit photos to [emilykerschen@hotmail.com](mailto:emilykerschen@hotmail.com), and we might just feature your picture in a future issue.



# FARMERS COOPERATIVE ELEVATOR COMPANY

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## JANUARY

Happy New Year! It was been a brutally cold start to January so far. It is hard to think about gardening right now; however, you can start your vegetables and flowers from seed inside the warmth of your home without getting cold. Starting plants from seed is fairly simple to do and can help you get a jump start on gardening. First, you want to make sure you are using viable seeds. Seeds typically will keep for 3 years if kept cool and dry during storage. Next, you will need to determine when to plant the seeds based on the transplanting date outdoors. For example, onion plants can be transplanted outdoors in March; however, tomato plants shouldn't be transplanted until May. Be sure to use a seed germination mix for best results. Other soils are too coarse, and native soil could contain diseases. Keep the soil moist and warm during the germination period. While a sunny windowsill works well, a heat mat and a plant light will provide better results.



## MARCH

Are you tired of weeds growing in your gravel driveway or parking lot? Using a herbicide combination found in a couple of products will kill them and prevent them from coming back. There are two herbicides found in these products. One of them is a nonselective herbicide that is found in Round Up that will kill anything that is green. The other is a pre-emergent herbicide that will prevent anything that grows from a seed from coming back for up to three months. The two products that have these herbicides in them are the Hi-Yield Killzall Extended Control and the NuFarm Prodeuce.



## FEBRUARY

Have you ever had a soil test? A soil test can provide you with lots of useful information such as what nutrients are lacking or are in excess, soil pH, and soil composition. Knowing what your garden or yard needs can help you become a better gardener. It can also provide you with an answer to why a certain area or plant is not doing well.

You will need to collect 6-8 inches of soil in several different areas in your lawn and/or garden that you are wanting tested. Mix those samples together and collect approximately one pint to get tested. You are now ready to take your soil sample to your local county extension office. They charge a small fee for the valuable information that you receive.

