

We Bring Ag Technology to Your Farm



The last few years have seen a boom in ag technology. Like many of you, I was skeptical about what kind of value this would actually bring to the fields of central Minnesota. A lot of this technology responded like fishing lures—it seemed to catch a lot more fisherman than fish. Over time, however, we have been able to see what has potential and what does not. The next step will be to work with technology that has potential to bring value to your farms.

Here are two technology platforms we believe have great potential.

A portal to share information

A few years back Monsanto bought a small weather tech company for a **BILLION DOLLARS**. After that, they invested billions more into it. Today, we know this company as Climate Corporation. I am sure most of you have heard of Climate or perhaps even use it in some way.

What excites me about Climate is that Glacial Plains now has a portal to share information back and forth between our agronomists and our growers. This portal can be used to validate trials like hybrid or fungicide comparisons, to see what the ROI actually is. Best of all, this can be done in real time via wireless connections.

For producers, this is a great place to store your as-planted and as-applied data in a simple, easy-to-use tool. If you would like to know more about all of the things Climate can do, please talk with a Glacial Plains agronomist.



Locate a weed problem while scouting and the location will show up on your yield maps at harvest.



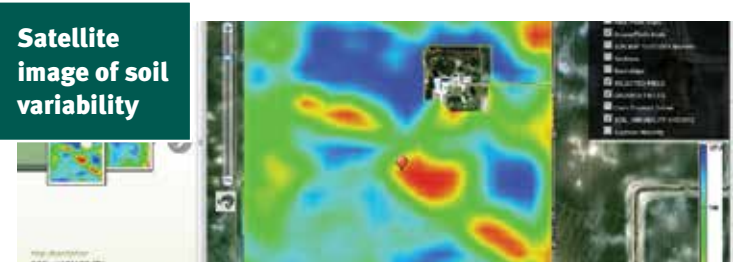
Chart showing top 10 performing hybrids in a search area.

In-season imagery

Glacial Plains is also excited to announce a new service to our patrons. This year, every customer who purchases seed from us will get access to WinField’s R7 Tool—**FREE OF CHARGE**.

The R7 Tool is one of the most robust ag tech platforms on the market. Some of the features include in-season imagery, planting and fertilizer zone prescriptions, and field monitoring. The R7 Tool has all Answer Plot and Insight trial results. It also includes hybrid comparisons and response-to-nitrogen, fungicide, population and corn-on-corn ratings for Croplan®, Dekalb®, NK®, Mycogen® and most Pioneer varieties.

Again, contact your Glacial Plains agronomist to find out how you can get access to WinField’s R7 Tool—**FREE OF CHARGE**. ♦



Satellite image of soil variability

BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

Keep up-to-date on markets, promotions and special events sponsored by Glacial Plains Cooperative. Call Terri Carlson at 320-875-2811 and give her your cell number or email address. She’ll add you to our Priority Notice list and make sure you’re among the first to receive important messages from the company you own. ♦



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Lowering Input Costs, Protecting Equities



AARON VADNAÏS  
Financial Services  
Manager

In these uncertain times, the risk of a farmer-owned cooperative losing members’ equity to uncollectable accounts receivable is high. It’s easy for the average farm to run up a balance of \$100,000. If just one producer defaults on his or her account, that’s \$100,000 we can’t use to buy fertilizer, or invest in the co-op to serve other farmers, or return to our members.

For this reason, Glacial Plains’ board of directors and management has decided not to allow any customer to purchase inputs on an open account and let that account ride until harvest. As our credit policy states, “Account balances are due by the 15th of each following month. If you do not pay your account by the 15th, you will be listed as a cash customer.”

As an alternative, we offer financing programs for seed, crop nutrients and crop protection products that not only help Glacial Plains protect its members’ equity, but help you reduce input costs. If you order your seed this fall under one of these programs, for instance, you may be able to purchase it 20% cheaper and finance it at a rate of 6-8% APR. Not only will you pay less for your seed now than you would next spring, but you will incur less interest cost than if you financed it on an account at 18% APR.

Ordering fertilizer in the fall for application next spring can also reduce your input costs. In talking with our

agronomy manager Lyndon Skogstad, there were only two years in the last 20 when fertilizer prices were cheaper in the spring than in the fall.

Let’s start planning today to lower the cost of your inputs and your interest. See your Glacial Plains agronomist or call me at 320-875-2810 to review the financing programs available. ♦



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

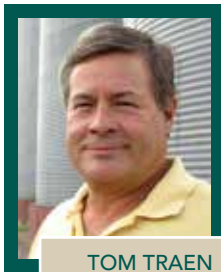
Liz Auch and Ashlie Johnson, health educators with Countryside Public Health, recently presented Benson C-Store manager Jane Saulsbury (center) with an award. Countryside had received two anonymous reports that Jane suggested a customer try herbal snuff as a way to help them quit chewing. It worked!

“Thanks for making a difference in your community,” Ashlie told Jane.



Glacial Plains applicator Tom Frikken spreads dry fertilizer on a field Jim Holleman of Benson will plant to corn next spring.

A New Health Insurance Option



TOM TRAEEN  
General Manager

In recent years, I’ve heard a number of complaints from our owners about the high cost of health insurance with worse coverage, disappearing copays and rising deductibles. I’ve also heard of customers losing access to preferred doctors, and the complexity of choosing a plan that is affordable and works for you. This past year,

the cooperative system has been working to provide a better option.

Glacial Plains Cooperative has partnered with Land O’Lakes BuyPoint™ Insurance Solutions and their chosen administrator, Gravie, to provide a new health benefits option that is designed exclusively for our farmers.

Starting Nov. 13, all agricultural producers who have done at least \$10,000 worth of business with Glacial Plains in our year ending June 30, 2017 will be able to call or go on line to sign up for health insurance (to be effective Jan. 1). If you qualify, you are already pre-registered.

Here’s what to expect:

- **Competitive Pricing**—lower than most individual policies and traditional group plans.
- **Access to Broad, National (PPO) Networks**—with over 100,000 providers, hospitals, clinics and pharmacies.
- **Many Health Plan Options**—with coverage ranging from catastrophic (high deductible, extremely low cost) to comprehensive (no deductible, virtually 100% coverage).
- **One-on-one Guidance**—from licensed advisors, experts in selecting and using benefits.
- **Access to Support**—both telephone and an intuitive, web-based tool for help selecting, enrolling in and managing benefits.
- **Easy Access to Additional Benefits**—like dental, vision, life, HSAs and more.
- **Guaranteed Coverage**—no member can be denied coverage or rated-up.
- **Gravie Care**—year-round benefits support.

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# A Cost vs. an Investment



The question many of us are asking in this depressed agricultural economy is, “Where can we cut costs?”

I think you’ll agree with me that, despite the low commodity price, another crop WILL get planted next spring. Instead of looking for places to cut costs, perhaps we need to change the way we look at the money we spend.

If we treat what we spend on growing a crop as an INVESTMENT instead of a cost, we may be able to make better decisions—decisions based on what we will get in return.

Decisions we make on crop inputs and crop protection can affect long-term investments, such as land, equipment and facilities. Good decisions are needed in our current crop year to realize a positive return on these long-term investments.

## Rely on our resources

A good investment requires research: studying data, and getting good advice about the products and services being considered. At Glacial Plains Cooperative, we have a very knowledgeable and experienced agronomy sales staff. They have access to information from thousands of data points gathered from replicated trials across our Answer Plot system.

We can help with your decision on which hybrids and varieties are the best fit for your farm—and for a specific field. Furthermore, we’ll help you decide how to manage each field to achieve the best return on your seed investment.

# A New Health Insurance Option *continued from page 1*

In 2016, Land O’Lakes initially introduced this program to their members in Wisconsin. About 75% of those members chose to participate. This response illustrates the cost savings, simplicity and support services offered by this solution. I have a great deal of confidence in Land O’Lakes, a key partner. Our own employees have gotten their health insurance coverage through Land O’Lakes for years and have been very happy with the product and the services.

## Open enrollment: Nov. 13 thru Dec. 1

Glacial Plains has put up the membership fee for our owners and looks forward to helping them save

## Putting your plans into action

Like a good partner, we’ll be there to help you from the initial planning stage until your crop is harvested.

After the hard decisions are made, you’ll need reliable delivery and placement of the products and services you choose. Glacial Plains has invested for the future. We have facilities and equipment that can handle volumes of seed, fertilizer, and chemicals efficiently and rapidly, to keep you going in the field. Besides our sales agronomists, we also employ an agronomy operations staff that works hard to get trucks loaded, products delivered and applied to your fields.

## Building your community

When you purchase from Glacial Plains Cooperative, you are not only buying quality products and expertise, you are investing in your local community. The profits are not extracted from our local area and distributed to stockholders. You are the shareholders in GPC. The money stays local.

It is your support of locally owned businesses like Glacial Plains that makes it possible for the community to have churches, schools, fire departments and other organizations dedicated to serving its citizens.

Glacial Plains employees also live in your community and serve as mayors, firefighters and other non-paid community servants. Your support of the local cooperative makes many of these volunteer hours possible.

So, you see, the money you spend to produce a crop is not just a cost. Let us help you get the most from your investment. Call the Clontarf Agronomy Center at 320-843-3949, the Benson Agronomy Center at 320-843-4820, or the Murdock Agronomy Center at 320-875-2810. ♦

thousands of dollars. Glacial Plains receives no income from this project. We just ask for your continued support in these difficult times.

We will hold two producer meetings to discuss this new health insurance option on Nov. 16 in Benson. Watch for details. We will be sending out additional information with phone numbers and websites in the near future, and we’ll have brochures explaining the process at all of our locations. Feel free to ask your agronomist about details.

Be safe and healthy this holiday season. ♦



# Don’t Fall Asleep on These Markets



The grain markets have lulled everyone to sleep since August, but the October USDA report finally gave us a little hope. The spike came in the soybean market as the USDA lowered the yields slightly to 49.5 bu/A. That was a relatively minor reduction for the rally we saw after the report was released, but the funds and the “experts” were so convinced of a bearish report that the yield reduction seemed to get magnified.

The concern I had with the USDA report was that they also raised the soybean planted acreage, which offset the yield reduction entirely. The bean production they used was 4.431 billion bushels, which was exactly the same as in the September report. Carryout on the report did drop slightly to 430 million, but that is still very comfortable. Any chance we get to sell beans over \$10.00 futures will be a good opportunity, in my opinion.

On the corn side of the report, things were not so friendly. The USDA raised the corn yield to 171.8 bu/A. verses their September estimate of 169.9 bu/A. That, in turn, jumped the U.S. production to 14.280 billion bushels, up nearly 100 million bushels from their September guess. Carryout on corn was pegged at 2.340 billion, which was 50 million over the average guess for this report. Those stats alone don’t paint a very good picture for any corn rallies.

The good news: we put in the low for December corn at 3.42 1/2 futures prior to the report and bounced a dime off the bearish news, thanks to soybeans pulling it higher. I expect a fairly flat trade in the corn futures over the next few months, until something changes with exports.

So, the big question becomes “What should we be doing at this point in time?” We need to take advantage of the massive carries in these markets. Currently, we are showing nearly 40-cent cash carries in corn going to July. We are showing 45-cent carries in soybeans over that same time period. That is an easy way to put some cash in your pocket, if you have the bin space. These carries are large enough to easily

cover your interest. As I mentioned earlier, these markets have lulled everyone to sleep, as we have been in a flat market for the last couple months. There may not have been much opportunity in nearby markets, but let’s start looking at next year. December corn futures are trading near \$4. Most producers would love to have a shot at \$4 futures this year, so why not get a start on next year. For those of you who use HTA’s and have the storage, this is an easy way to make \$3.50 cash corn for the summer of 2018. That will pay the bills in some currently rough times. Same goes for the bean market for 2018. November 2018 futures are also over \$10, as I write this article. Don’t fall asleep on these opportunities.

If the current carryouts stay at these comfortable levels, these futures will leak lower to match our current futures as time passes, and the unknowns, like weather, fall into place. Without a weather issue somewhere to cause a large yield reduction, these futures levels are here to stay.

Exports become the next big question. Right now, those are below par, as well, and look bleak into the future. Basis levels will continue to show this the balance of the year. There are a lot of unknowns moving forward, but my recommendation remains to start looking ahead. Calculate your break-evens for next year and start crunching some numbers. If you have a chance to make a profit, let’s get started. ♦



Glacial Plains, with matching funds from CHS, Co Bank and Land O’Lakes, donated \$8,000 to the new fire department building in Clontarf. Pictured (left to right) are Dale Hagestuen, Tom Johnson, Tom Traen and Jim Johnson.

# To Dry or Not to Dry: Decision-Making Tools



Corn in Swift County may be higher moisture than normal. You may face the risk of leaving it in the field to dry down further or assuming the expense of drying it to a point where it can be stored until shipping.

In his article “Energy Costs for Corn Drying and Cooling,” University of Minnesota (U of M) Extension Engineer Bill Wilcke reviews the benefits and downsides of drying and cooling corn. He also offers a formula for calculating your cost per bushel per point of moisture removed.

According to Wilcke, the most accurate way to calculate costs is by keeping drying records, including “quality of grain dried, amount of moisture removed and energy use to remove that moisture.” If that information is not available, he offers a formula at <https://www.extension.umn.edu/agriculture/corn/harvest/energy-costs-for-corn-drying-and-cooling/index.html>. (Just Google “U of M Energy Costs for Corn Drying.”) Plug in the number of points of moisture you wish to remove and the cost of your propane or electricity.

As an example, Wilcke assumes the burner on your dryer will consume 0.02 gallons of propane and 0.01 kWh of electricity per bushel per percentage point of moisture removed. He assumes you wish to remove five points of moisture from your corn, and that your propane costs \$2.25 and your electricity costs 0.10 kWh. You can do that, he calculates, for \$.23/bu. Again, plug in your own figures for a closer estimate of your drying costs.

Wilcke warns against over-drying grain. Not only can it cost more than it’s worth, but it can “reduce the weight of grain available for sale” and increase kernel breakage.

Should you decide to dry your crop, Glacial Plains Cooperative can offer further assistance. Call us at our Benson Energy office: 320-842-5311. ♦



Your local cooperative is a reliable supplier of clean-burning propane for crop drying.



# Goodbye to a Valued Staff Member

LEIF CARLSON, Benson Agronomy Manager

Long-time employee Mike Maras has decided to call it a career at Glacial Plains Cooperative. His last day at work was Oct. 17.

Mike has been with the company for 40 years, starting with Swift Co-op Oil in 1977. In his time spent here, Mike has done about every job from delivering fuel to applying fertilizer and crop protection chemicals. Most recently, he worked in the sales office.

We will miss Mike’s experience and his relationships with numerous customers. With change comes adjustment, and we have staff in place to help with your agronomic decisions.

## Decisions for next year

~~The harvest season has wrapped up for most of you, and~~ it’s time to start thinking about the 2018 crop year. Stop in and make field plans for fertilizer and seed for next spring. Planning early will benefit you, and will help everyone be efficient in the busy season.

At Glacial Plains, we carry Dekalb®, Croplan®, Mycogen® and NK Brand® corn, along with Asgrow®, Croplan®, Mycogen® and Credenz® beans. We can also help with your decisions on the various weed control systems available, whether it be RoundUp®, Liberty® or Xtend®.

Come in and talk with Dustin, Mark Mittenness or me. We’ll be glad to assist you. ♦