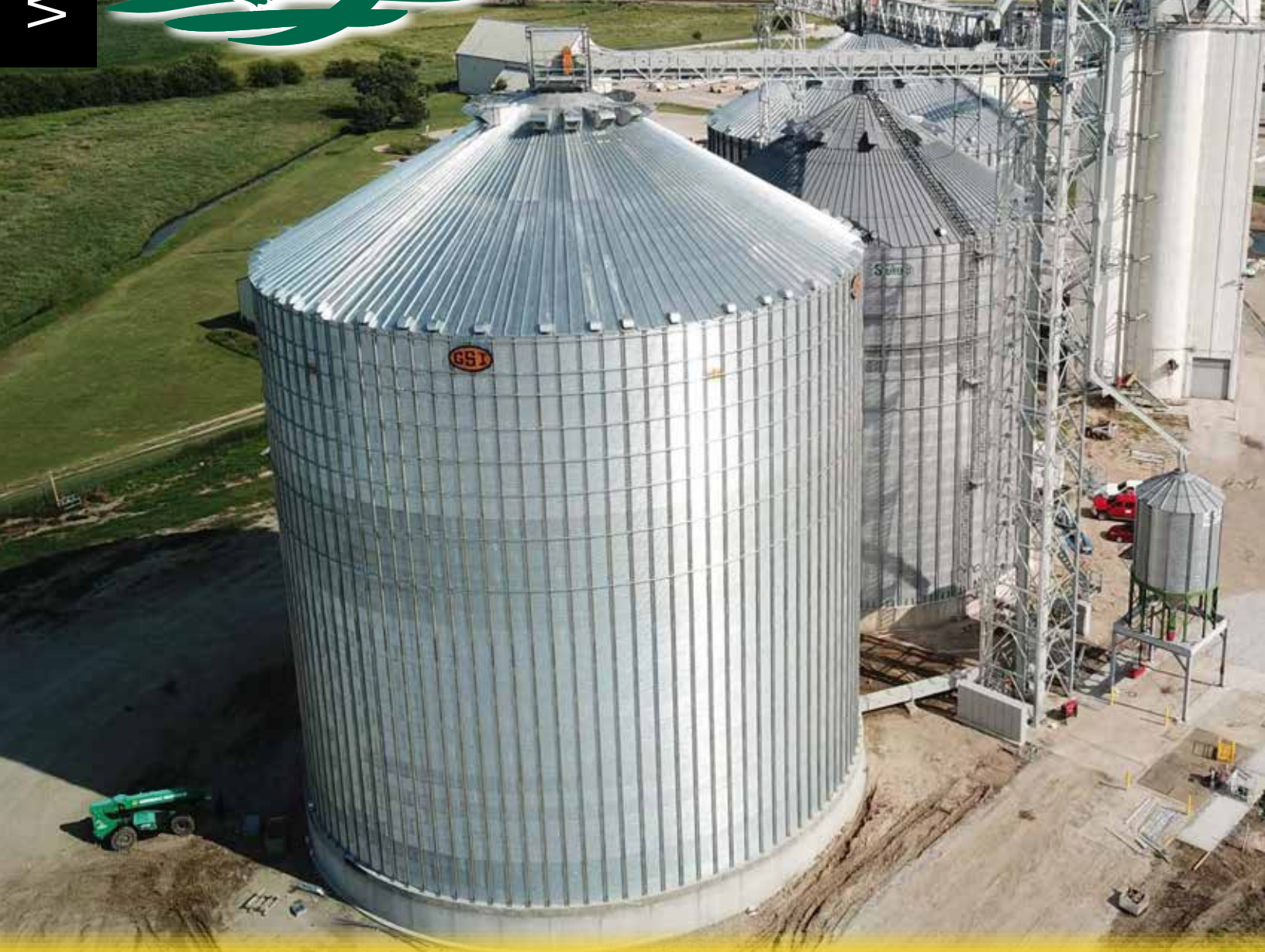


WINTER 2019



Midwest

Farmers Cooperative



PATHWAY Newsletter

January 2019



Jeremy Wilhelm
CEO

As you read this, we have just wrapped up our Annual Meeting and as reported, we had a successful 2018. Profits were up despite the tough farm economy. This was due to some increased efficiencies at our locations and overall volume being higher. Some of the highlights from 2018; propane sales were up over 20% with the cold winter last year and dry fertilizer volume was up over 40% with the new dry fertilizer facility in Syracuse. The new dry fertilizer plant opened up in November and the startup of the facility went pretty smooth. Some of you have asked "What do we do with our profits?" The answer is primarily two uses.

First, we invest back into our communities by increasing grain storage, fertilizer storage and upgrading rolling stock like sprayers and trucks. We added 1.5 million bushels of storage capacity in the past twelve months. We doubled the storage capacity at our Otoe anhydrous plant and plan to build a new anhydrous plant between Elmwood and Murdock. Our new propane truck is the biggest propane truck we have ever owned. Our new fuel truck is also the biggest fuel truck we have ever owned, which creates efficiencies in routing our trucks to serve you. You can dump a load of grain in Syracuse and be scaled out in less than three minutes. You can get a truck load of dry fertilizer in four minutes. Your anhydrous tank will be filled in Otoe in five minutes. The speed is important to keep traffic flowing during our peak seasons and to get our patrons back to the field as quickly as possible.

The second thing we do with our profits is we pay cash patronage and redeem your equity. Patronage is paid each year (assuming we are profitable). This year we are pleased to announce that cash patronage and allocated equity to patrons is \$3.3 million. Your equity is redeemed in a number of different ways. Our qualified equity is paid out to patrons when they turn 72. It is paid to estates when a patron passes away. We are also paying out equity based upon the year it was allocated and we have currently paid the equity through 2002. Over the past five years the cash patronage and allocated equity to our members has been \$13.7 million.

This is the benefit of the cooperative system. Farmers working together to do things they couldn't do on their own. Your cooperatives profits stay local. They don't get shipped out of state or out of the country. They stay right here in your hometown. With that, I want to thank you for your business this past year and I want to let you know that we are here to serve our owners...you. Let's have a great 2019.

Midwest Farmers Cooperative teamed up with Land O'Lakes and CoBank to donate to the Rural Back Pack program with the Food Bank of Lincoln. One in five children in Nebraska under the age of 18 is at risk for hunger. This program provides back packs filled with healthy food for children of need to take home on Friday afternoons. This year the donation by Midwest Farmers Cooperative will go to children in Adams, Bennet-Palmyra, Elmwood-Murdock, HTRS, Norris, Pawnee City, Raymond Central, Syracuse, Tecumseh and Waverly.





Neil Stedman
Board of Directors
Chairman

2018 Chairman's Report

This past fiscal year was another active year for your Board of Directors and the management team as we continue to position your cooperative for future success. The decisions we make and the direction we lead your coop revolve around five fundamental strategic anchors:

- Focus on safety first.
- Strive for our customers' success.
- Employ people who care.
- Achieve operational excellence.
- Commit to personal and professional growth.

If we succeed in these five core areas we believe we will continue to strengthen Midwest Farmers Cooperative to best serve the agriculture producers of southeast Nebraska, both now and in the future.

January 1, 2019 marked the five year anniversary of the merger of Farmers Cooperative Company and Midwest Farmers Cooperative. Today there are several highlights from the past five years that I would like to share with you. 9.5M bushels of permanent grain storage has been erected and brought into service since the merger in January of 2014. That includes the addition of the state-of-the-art Syracuse rail shuttle facility and additional grain storage in Bennet, Elmwood, Greenwood, Mynard, and Waverly. Additional grain elevation capabilities were added at Elmwood, Bennet, and Waverly as well.

In the past five years your coop has invested a total of \$70.4M in property, plant, and equipment across all of our business enterprises. A brief list of the additional upgrades would include:

- A new bulk energy distribution plant near Elk Creek.
- The state-of-the-art dry fertilizer storage and distribution facility at the Syracuse rail facility.
 - Additional new anhydrous ammonia trailers and improved anhydrous ammonia bulk plants at several locations.
 - Chemical applicators and new agronomy, energy and grain rolling stock scattered throughout our trade geography.
 - A new seed shed at Tecumseh North and seed treatment facilities at Auburn and Tecumseh North.

This list is by no means complete in detailing the investments and improvements that have taken place in the last five years. I am pleased to report that in addition to the improvements and investments taking place that your coop continues to return cash to our owners, you the patrons of Midwest Farmers Cooperative. Patronage checks are being distributed this year that will total more than \$1.3M. Additionally equity redemption checks and estate requests of \$1.5M were mailed out this past year. Combined, a total of \$2.8M was returned to the patrons this past year. Since January of 2014 \$13.7M of cash patronage and equity has been redeemed and allocated to our patrons.

Neil Stedman lives on the family farm near Burr, NE where he raises corn and soybeans, and operates a seed sales business. He and his wife Stephanie have a four year old daughter, Mardy, and a nearly two year old son, Bridger.

Neil is a graduate of Southeast Community College in Lincoln and was chosen to participate in the Nebraska LEAD Program Class XXIII.

He was elected to serve on Farmers Cooperative Company's (Waverly) Board of Directors in 2006. He has completed all four phases of the Director Certification Program sponsored by the Nebraska Cooperative Council, finishing those classes in 2008.

Neil was elected board chairman of Farmers Cooperative Company in 2011 and served in that capacity until their merger with Midwest Farmers Cooperative in January 2014. He was elected and continues to serve as the chairman of Midwest Farmers Cooperative.

He enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, outdoor activities, and working on and riding motorcycles.

.... Continued on Page 4

Chairman's Report Continued from Page 3

These are both exciting and challenging times to be in agriculture. The Board of Directors and management team continues to work hard to identify both the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and continue to work to position your company to maximize the opportunities. Your coop is well positioned both financially and strategically to weather the current downturn in the agriculture sector.

Finally, the Board and management team want to thank all of you, our loyal patrons and owners, for the business you do with us on a daily basis. Our mission is to provide the highest level of customer service, aligning products and technology to create Customer and Cooperative success. Please let a board member or our management team know if we are not fulfilling our mission on your operation.

To conclude my remarks I would like to take a moment to recognize an important group of people for their daily efforts, and that is our dedicated employee group. Our employees are a key reason why Midwest Farmers Coop had another successful year. If you get a chance, please thank them in person the next time you see them.



Craig Schultz
COO

New Grain Storage

The front cover is a picture of the new grain storage addition at our Waverly East location which was approved by your Board of Directors last fiscal year 2017-2018. Growing yields and the need for additional dump capacity at the Waverly location were the main factors in building this project. This fall harvest, we were able to dump corn trucks into four pits reducing the amount of time required at our location. We were able to get trucks in and out in less than five minutes and keep our customers moving back to their fields quicker.

The project began after the harvest of 2017. We were able to start ground stabilization in November and get the auger cast pilings drilled with concrete work starting December of 2017. Although we had some colder weather, the crews were able to keep working on the concrete project and get that done before the spring activities hit. Installation of the bin, receiving and reclaim equipment went quickly with the electricians finishing up before harvest started for 2018. It was a great project with some decent weather to help during the build.

The project consisted of a 788,000 bushel steel GSI tank, new 20,000 bushel per hour leg and fill equipment, 1100 bushel mechanical dump pit, as well as 10,000 bushel per hour reclaim equipment. We also installed an additional 20,000 bushel per hour fill conveyor from our new receiving leg to our existing 500,000 bushel steel tank. We added electrical automation to this project to aid our employees with the work they do every day to provide great customer service for our patrons.

With the additional storage this year and timely sales, this enabled us to keep corn from being piled on the ground as in the past. This project provides a footprint for the future with additional storage capacity if needed. As always, we continue to assess all of our locations for speed and space and bring our best options forward for our customers.

Thank you for all of your continued business!! We look forward to helping create customer success!!





Gayln Boesiger

Grain Division
Manager

Grain News

This past harvest seems to be the gift that keeps on giving. I would have never expected corn and soybean harvest to continue into January, but that is what we have as I am writing this article. It appears as though the weather may finally cooperate enough to get most of the unharvested acres done shortly.



We received a record amount of corn this past harvest. By the time it is all said and done, we should be in

the neighborhood of 26 million bushels of corn dumped in our facilities. The harvest was strung out enough to keep us from clogging up at most of our facilities. We had a couple of uncovered corn piles at Mynard and Syracuse, but we have since picked those up and put them away with no problems.

The bean harvest didn't treat us quite as well as corn did. Yields were disappointing in some areas and good in others. On average yields were down 10 to 15%, or even more compared to the prior year. We will end up with around seven million bushels dumped in our facilities this harvest. We continue to move beans out since many that we are receiving are still fairly wet. The bean quality was rather poor on some fields as well, with damage being quite common in many places.

We continue to load anywhere from two to four trains per month from our Syracuse shuttle facility. From September 1st thru December 31st, we loaded out thirteen trains of corn. These trains represent over 5.4 million bushels leaving the area, which definitely allows harvest to go much smoother. In addition to the Syracuse rail, we also loaded out 90 cars at Manley.

We also continue to truck to surrounding ethanol plants and soybean processors. During the timeframe from September thru December we trucked out nearly six million bushels of corn and over two million bushels of beans.

Many of you who took part in the different marketing contracts that were offered over the past year saw the benefit that these can have in your marketing plan as you hauled in this fall. Please talk to us soon about getting on board with these contracts again this spring. We are soon approaching the time that typically gives us some of the better opportunities as spring rolls around.

Over the next couple months, we should start to see many of you wanting to core or empty bins. We will most likely have some type of DP program in place. Keep in contact with us for details coming soon.



Governor Pete Ricketts and Steve Wellman, Director of Agriculture for Nebraska, toured the Syracuse Ag Service Terminal during National Cooperative Month.

Shown above with employees: Craig Schultz, Gov. Ricketts, Eric Werth, Michelle Smith, Trent Bohling and Shawn Clifton.

Left: Patron Bill Goering (center) visits with Wellman and Ricketts.



Cooperative Finance Association Options

If you are considering a new funding source for your input expenses, you do not need to look any further than your local Coop. Again this year, Midwest Farmers Cooperative is teaming up with the Cooperative Finance Association (CFA) to offer financing options to MFC producers with rates as low as 5.75%. This Input Finance Program is for the 2019 crop year. Some of the benefits of the 2019 Crop Input Finance Program are:

- Improves security of product supply
- Locks-in input costs to maximize income potential and reduce risk
- Secures a confidential source of payment for input products and services
- Presents a comprehensive agronomic relationship to complement your operation
- Offers early payoff without penalty
- Saves time with a convenient one-stop source for all your input needs
- Helps avoid late payment service fees and finance charges.

Financing is available for fertilizer, chemicals, seed, application, fuel and ag use propane purchased from Midwest Farmers Cooperative. The loan is due February 15, 2020 and interest is only charged on amounts financed.

For more information or to receive an application, contact your local MFC Field Agronomist, or Craig Beougher in the Elmwood office at 402-994-2585. We will handle your application efficiently and professionally and all your information is completely confidential.



Planning for the Upcoming Year



Bill Hotchkiss



What a year it has been! Early plans were put in place to maximize yields prior to planting. The weather went from a cold spring with many emergence issues to blistering hot conditions making it difficult to control weeds. Later we had plenty of rain to fill the grain, but it kept raining and would not stop, making it a difficult harvest. Because of the delayed harvest, we have had difficulties getting on your fall herbicides and anhydrous applications.

Now is the time to sit down with your agronomist to plan for the upcoming spring. We know that there are plans that have been made and practices that, because of the weather, are no longer viable. We want to be ready to meet your needs when Mother Nature throws a wrench in our best made plans.

Our agronomy team is ready to help develop plans to control your difficult weeds, provide the best options for your fertility needs, and help with your seed placement. We want to make sure that we have the correct product in the right place, so it is there when you need it. For example, if you are looking to move away from anhydrous to a liquid fertilizer (because of the weather delays) let us know so your product is ordered, locked in at a decent price, and is in place for you to use when you need it. Those of you who had plans of a fall application of herbicide for Marestail will need to have an alternative plan to combat these tough weeds.

Our message to you is to have a primary plan and a back plan in place for this upcoming year. Let us help you develop these plans so we are prepared to provide the products and services you need for the upcoming season. Our goal is to help make this a smooth spring, but we know that there will be challenges ahead of us if we are not prepared. Contact your agronomist to discuss the right plans for your operation.





Keith Volker
Energy Division
Manager

Fuel Contracting

"Timing is everything". This old saying remains true today, at least mostly true. While timing may not be everything, it remains a big influence on how our decisions turn out. Specifically, when is a good time to contract fuel, or is it wise to contract fuel?

Each growing season is different and it's the same in the fuel business. The fuel market is heavily influenced by the global supply and demand of crude oil. Today the United States is a net exporter of crude oil (who would have thought this 10 years ago?) and one of the big three world producers (Saudi Arabia, Russia, and the US).

Between mid-October and the end of December, diesel fuel prices dropped more than 70¢ per gallon: That's huge. Maybe it will go lower, but it seems to me we should take advantage of this opportunity. Several factors are affecting the price:

Global supplies of crude oil are very adequate, meaning supply is good. This should limit the price from moving higher.

Demand for diesel fuel and gasoline is reasonably good in the U.S. but the global economy appears to be slowing. This should have a depressing effect on the price.

OPEC and Russia intend to limit crude oil production. In the past 3 years they've demonstrated they can move the crude market higher by trimming the barrels they produce. This should move the price of gasoline and diesel fuel higher.

When the fund managers come into the market to buy or sell, they can move the market and establish a trend. So take your pick where the market price is going. As of this writing contracting for the 2019 growing season still allows us to take advantage of most of this price pull back. It looks to me that getting part of your fuel prices locked in at today's rates makes perfect sense. Call for details. #402-994-2585

PROPANE: When we get to the end of winter we will shift our efforts to change out regulators for our customers. If your regulators are at least 15 years old we need to install new ones. We will let you know if yours need to be replaced and we will let you know the cost. This is a safety issue that can't be ignored.

With the drop of crude oil from \$75 per barrel in mid-October to below \$50 today, the price of propane has moved lower too. Coupled with the unseasonably warm weather prior to Christmas and going into the new year, it looks like the price of propane may remain relatively low. The truck price today is slightly lower than our winter contract price. But don't let this anomaly change your opinion on contracting propane when we send out contracts in May. The vast majority of the time you will save money by contracting your winter propane needs.

Save yourself some discomfort: During the winter please check the gauge on your propane tank occasionally. If you are on our route this doesn't mean you can let us take sole responsibility to keep your tank full. Our system estimates when you need to fill based on your past use. If you use at a rate faster than normal, we don't know that. Running out on a cold winter night isn't much fun. Please watch your gauge.

Scholarship Opportunities

Midwest Farmers Cooperative is again offering multiple scholarships up to \$2,500 for students entering a college or technical school to further his or her education by majoring in agricultural studies. Eligibility requirements and the application can be found on the website at www.midwestfarmers.coop or by contacting area high school counselors. Completed applications must be received no later than March 1, 2019 for consideration. The MFC Board of Directors will make the selections and announce the recipients in April.

The Nebraska Cooperative Council Education Foundation will provide nine scholarships for the 2019/2020 academic year to students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis, and the University of Nebraska-Kearney. Each scholarship has different qualifications. Additional information and the online application forms can be found on the Council's website at <http://www.nebr.coop/foundation/scholarships>. Applications must be submitted electronically no later than April 15, 2019 and recipients will be announced in June.



Brockhoff Receives Employee Excellence Award

In 2018 The Employee Advisory Group (EAG) of Midwest Farmers Coop developed a program designed to recognize employee excellence for outstanding customer service, innovation for greater efficiencies or for going above and beyond with the employee's duties and responsibilities. Several employees were recognized throughout the year for their exceptional activities.

All employees previously recognized employees were considered for one Annual Employee Excellence Award. Mark Brockhoff with the energy division was selected by the EAG for this honor. He was awarded a plaque from CEO Jeremy Wilhelm along with a \$250 gift card. Mark was nominated by his supervisor, Keith Volker. Keith had this to say about Mark:

"During this past winter, Mark consistently exhibited extra efforts and quality of work in our propane division. Mark was on duty every Saturday and some Sundays in addition to the regular work week. He not only managed his own delivery route but set up routes and managed other drivers as well as managing the company owned inventory. Throughout the exceptionally cold winter, Mark showed additional leadership qualities by talking through and helping the other drivers deal with out of gas and customer repair issues. For the difficult service work, Mark made the service call himself. Mark was also available to me 24/7 when I needed a resource for customer out of gas calls and repairs. Mark always performs our propane service work the right way each time, never any shortcuts. His work is of the highest standard and when he finishes a job I know it's been done correctly. Additionally, Mark made numerous repairs on our delivery trucks to keep our fleet running in the bitterly cold weather. Mark maintains his service and delivery trucks correctly and works diligently with the other drivers in our propane division helping them learn and follow the correct maintenance protocol."

Mark was also recognized with a plaque for 15 years of service.



Eleven employees who were honored at the annual meeting represent over 165 years of service to your Coop.

Front Left to Right: Lisa Smithers (10), Ann Parrish (5), Kim Griepentstroh (20), Mary Nygaard (5), Steve Cole (5)

Back Left to Right: Jim Woitzel (40), Mike Carroll (5), Charles Cropp (45), Brian Irwin (10), David Baumeister (15), Jason Deppe (5)

Others recognized but not in attendance: Dave Johnson (5), Amanda Gerking (5), Dan Rottman II (10), Bob Davis (20), Steve Michels (20), Wayne Heyen (30)



Marsha Whetham
CFO

Payment Options for Increased Security

According to the most recent information available from the Federal Reserve, the number of checks used for payments continues to decline in favor of electronic payment methods. However, the total value of check payments still outpaces electronic transactions about 4 to 1. Paper checks are still where the money is, so this is a popular place for the people who are committing check fraud. According to the American Bankers Association, 1.2 million fraudulent checks enter the banking system every day.

The most important factor to avoid a loss from any type of check fraud is a daily account reconciliation. Simply verifying your transactions and balancing your checking account each day will help you to immediately recognize any fraudulent activity. If you suspect any fraudulent activity on your account, you should contact your bank immediately.



Midwest Farmers Coop is actively pursuing ways to make your financial transactions with us as safe and secure as possible. In June of 2018 we began offering our patrons the ability to make payments online, using your bank account through a program called Bill.com. This has been very popular with our patrons and is a voluntary program, provided at no cost to you. Those who choose to participate will receive your monthly statement by email and then receive an invoice from Bill.com which allows for you to schedule your payment. For more information or to sign up for this service just log into our web site at www.midwestfarmers.coop. Select "Departments" then select the "Administration" option. On the left side of the screen you will see "Bill.com Signup". Just click on that button where you will add your name, email address and account number. Verify that you are not a robot, and we will get you set up for this service.

Another free benefit we offer is the ability to receive your grain settlements by ACH (Automated Clearing House). These electronic transactions are more secure than traditional checks for dealing with large dollar amounts and the funds arrive more quickly than with the traditional mail service. If you are interested in changing how your grain funds are delivered, a form is available on the Administrative page of the website shown above. Some restrictions from lienholders apply. For more information on this service, contact your MFC grain merchandiser or Norma Jones at norma.jones@midwestfarmers.coop.



Jim Bauman
Feed Division
Manager

Midwest Farmers Coop - Events & Specials

As we enter into 2019 there are many things to be thankful for and some things we would like to forget. The same holds true for Midwest Farmers Coop: This was a challenging year at harvest but we have survived and like most farmers, look forward to what 2019 has in store for us.

The cattle and hog markets have been jumping all around with the political and trade disputes mainly between the US and China. Hopefully they get things ironed out. The feeder calf market is pretty close to the three year average for this time of year according to the economists at FC Stone. Even though we have a lot more pounds of beef going into the markets for 2019, demand has been good with new markets and increased exports to places other than China.

Midwest Farmers will offer specials this winter and spring on Purina horse products like Impact Professional Performance and Equine Senior. We also have some new, improved swine show feeds with a special purchase price. Keep in touch with our sales team to stay abreast of these specials.

We will also have four beef meetings coming in February with mineral and lick tub offerings. Invitations and flyers will go out as we get all the details together.

We will be having Chick Days again in March at the Walton location. Check with any of the crew in Walton for your baby chick needs. They can also order chick delivery for any time of year that you need them.





Wade Phillips

Key Account Manager



The Value of Pre-Emerge Chemicals

Developing a successful early season weed management program is important for maximizing yield potential in soybeans and corn. Profitable crop production starts with a weed control program that includes pre-plant and or pre-emergence herbicides to deliver long lasting residual weed control. Application of a soil applied residual herbicide early in the season can keep your crop from competing with weeds, for space, nutrients, water, sunlight and a warmer seed bed.

Selection of a residual program should be based on one or more of the following:

1. Weed control spectrum
2. Length of residual activity
3. Herbicide mode of action
4. Application timing flexibility
5. Ability to control herbicide resistant weeds
6. Crop rotational flexibility

Regardless of your production system pre emergence residual herbicide protects your crop with early, effective and lasting weed control to help maximize yields and profitability.

What is "Mode of Action?" The mode of action is the way in which the herbicide controls susceptible plants. It usually describes the biological process or enzyme in the plant that the herbicide interrupts, affecting normal plant growth and development. Some herbicide modes of action comprise several chemical families that vary slightly in their chemical composition, but control susceptible plants in the same way and cause similar injury symptoms.

Why is it important to know the Mode of Action? Knowing and understanding each herbicide's mode of action is an important step in selecting the proper herbicide for each crop, diagnosing herbicide injury, and designing a successful weed management program for your crop protection system.

Herbicide Resistant Weeds Over reliance on a single herbicide active ingredient or mode of action places heavy selection pressure on a weed population and may eventually select for resistant individuals. Over time the resistant individuals will multiply and become the dominant weeds in the field, resulting in herbicides that are no longer effective for weed control. Simply rotating herbicide active ingredients is not enough to prevent the development of herbicide resistant weeds.

Why do we Layer Mode of Action? When we start with a pre-plant herbicide with multiple modes of action and residual, or a pre-emergence product with multiple modes of action and residual activity, followed by an early post emergence product with different multiple modes of action and residual, weed control will be improved greatly. If a program is put together using 1-2 modes of action versus a program that has 3-4 modes of action, the likelihood of future weed resistance is magnified.

Manage Palmer and Waterhemp in Soybeans and Corn with Layered Residual Herbicides With Palmer and Waterhemp becoming more widespread and herbicide resistant populations expanding, including multiple-resistant populations, Palmer and Waterhemp is increasingly difficult to manage. In addition it has a long emergence pattern and frequently outlasts control of an early pre-emergence herbicide application. One strategy is to layer residual herbicides to control resistant weed by extending the duration of seedling control. Products that will provide extended control are Dual II Magnum, Outlook and Warrant. The season long control of layered (pre or post) applications persist through the end of the season, giving control of resistance weeds up to 95 percent.

Regardless of your production pre-emergence, post-emergence residual herbicide protects your crop with early, effective and lasting weed control to help maximize yields and profitability.

... Continued on Page 11



Chemicals Continued from Page 10

Weed Control Studies have shown that if weeds grow to 9 inches, soybean yield can be reduced by as much as 6%; 12-inch weeds can result in up to a 10% yield loss. In corn, 12-inch weeds could cause 22% yield loss when left uncontrolled. We know that many weeds develop at different times in the growing season. Marestalk starts to develop early in the season as a rosette and from seed, but Waterhemp/Palmer Pigweed emerges later in the season and continues to emerge until harvest. Knowing the weeds in the field and knowing the biology of these weeds helps determine the correct mode of action to use, help us decide which chemicals to use based on the residual properties, and when to apply them to the field.

Focus Chemicals Out of all the offerings that Midwest Coop has access to, we have found that for pre-emergence and post-emergence control in corn, Acuron, Verdict, Rescore, Corves and Calisto GT are some of the most consistent products available. The same can be said for Broadaxe, Zidua Pro, Sonic and Fierce XLT that are used in soybeans

In conclusion, we have learned that it is a must to utilize a combination of pre-emergence and post-emergence herbicides, use different modes of action to slow down weed resistance (Waterhemp, Palmer pigweed etc.) and that pre-emergence residual herbicides are the foundation of success.

It is important to rely on your local agronomist to put together a plan that includes multiple modes of action to control these hard to manage weeds. We can put together a plan that will layer the modes of action, have residual activity, and be effective on your tough to control weeds. We are here to help you through the complexity of this concept of "mode of action" to get the best weed control in your fields.

High School FFA News

The Auburn FFA is one of ten chapters which earned a grant to continue their incubator/egg hatching project and to purchase kits which include hands on models and activities to expand their knowledge of the animal industry. These students are studying eggs and have learned how to candle them. Incubated eggs are candled to determine whether they are fertile and, if fertile, to check the growth and development of the embryo.

The other chapters earning grants are Nebraska City for grow towers; Syracuse for chrome books; Freeman for a

Strengths Finder Assessment; Conestoga for an animal lab; Palmyra for a tower garden, learning lab kit and leadership training; Ashland-Greenwood for a composting project; Waverly for a TIG welder and supplies; Crete to purchase metal for new welding tables and The Career Academy in Lincoln to purchase a food quality microwave, dehydrator and vacuum sealer for their food science class.

Midwest Farmers Cooperative Chief Executive Officer, Jeremy Wilhelm said, "We are proud to

support these chapters and the young men and women that have an interest in agriculture. It is a small way that we can give back to the communities that support Midwest Farmers Cooperative and a way to support the future of agriculture."



Area FFA Chapters Receive their Grant Checks



Conestoga High School



Crete High School



Freeman High School



Lincoln Career Academy



Nebraska City High School



Syracuse High School





Trent Bohling
Grain Merchandiser

Marketing Strategies for 2019

The 2018 marketing year posed many challenges as political uncertainties came to light. We can assume that 2019 and beyond will be riddled with unforeseen challenges as well. No matter how we try to fight off emotional marketing decisions, they happen at some point for every one of us. For 2019, I encourage you to rely more on data and less on the emotions and events that affect your day to day operation.

We will again offer the Weighted Average Contract for 2019. Sign up is now until March 1st, with pricing beginning the first Wednesday of April. Three, five, ten, and twenty year charts were used to determine what weeks from April 1 to September 1 pricing was most profitable. We price 0-11% of your enrolled corn and bean bushels throughout that time period. This year's program created a December corn price of \$3.92 less basis. At the time of expiration, December corn was \$3.65. Similarly, soybean values were \$9.45 less basis on the weighted average contract, while the board at expiration of this contract pricing was \$8.43. Not every year will have this type of advantage, but our goal is to reduce risk and use probabilities that put us in the driver's seat for the best possible prices. Minimum enrollment is 1000 bu corn, 500 bu beans. We have no maximum enrollment, but we do not encourage more than 20% of expected production in any program.

Last year we also offered Accumulator Contracts throughout the year. These contracts offer you a premium price in exchange for an offer of a double-up quantity of your enrolled bushels. For example, if today's December corn price is \$4.00, you may be able to price 5000 bu at \$4.20 in exchange for another 5,000 firm offer if the board closes above \$4.20 at the specified expiration date. You could potentially price 10,000 bu at \$4.20 regardless of how high the market were to climb. We will be offering a rolling enrollment for these types of products, so please let us know as soon as possible so we can discuss in more detail. This is a contract that needs to be fully understood before placing bushels as there are multiple moving parts.

These programs are designed for harvest-delivery grain, and are also available for delivery to our common direct-ship locations. We have other programs for your bin-stored grain, so let us know how we can help. Please give us a call at your convenience to discuss these contracts and make sure we do not miss any sign-up deadlines. Thanks for trusting us with your 2018 marketing. Have a great 2019 and let us know how we can help!



Dave Reese
Agronomy
Division Manager



Spring Challenges

The wet, snowy fall and late harvest coupled with the ground not freezing has put everyone behind with their spring 2019 plans. This spring is setting itself up to be very challenging. With the lack of fertilizer applied in the fall and so far this winter, it will all have to be applied in a very short window this year. Unfortunately, the issues we have in Southeast Nebraska are about the same across the entire Midwest. We anticipate there will be some major supply and logistic issues for the fertilizer distribution system as a whole. From the manufacturers making and storing the product, to us picking the product up at distribution centers and transportation concerns, the entire system is going to feel some pain this spring. We are as well positioned as possible going into this spring to take care of our customers. However, the more information that you can provide to our agronomists about your plans for fertilizers will help us do an even better job of having the product on hand for you when you need it.

We know that the spring might be a little tense but don't lose sight of the fact that we need to feed the crop what it needs to be fed to maximize your yields next fall. You have to grow the bushels to be successful and if your soil lacks the proper balance of nitrogen, phosphorus, potash, zinc, and sulfur we are cutting back on the potential bushels for harvest. Take the time to plan what you need for your crop and let us know how we can help you accomplish what you need to get done. Our goal is to help you be as successful as possible.

Thank you for your business and have a safe spring.



Duane Uhe
Agronomist



Incorporating Fungicides, Pesticides and PGR's

Many of you have put together your farm plans for the year but there are several of our producers who are still struggling with where to spend their input dollars with all the outside pressure for their money. We know that seed, hard chemistry and fertilizer inputs are standard expenditures, but I would like to have you think outside those normal options and look at some areas that many successful producers have added to their farm programs to add substantial increased yields to their bottom line.

There are three main areas that we have found that will add consistent yields outside of the traditional herbicides, seed and fertilizers. One is the use of foliar fungicides in either soybeans or corn. Another is the use of a foliar insecticide to control insects and used in conjunction with a herbicide or fungicide application and the last is the use of Plant Growth Regulators (PGR's).

This last harvest we saw environmental pressures on both corn and soybeans. The use of a fungicide applied as a foliar helped increase plant health, and provided excellent stand-ability as the harvest continued into the month of December. We have found an increase of 15-20 bushels in corn when using a foliar fungicide and 7-10 bushels in soybeans.

The second area to consider spending input dollars would be in a foliar insecticide. We witnessed many different insect problems in soybeans and when an insecticide was tank mixed with a herbicide or fungicide, the injury was substantially reduced. Many fields that had soybean stalk borer and soybean gall midge would have benefited from this application.

The third area I want to discuss is the Plant Growth Regulators (PGR's) that are available as a seed treatment or can be applied as a foliar application. PGR's can be grouped into three areas and I have listed examples for each category.

Biostimulants/Hormones:

- 1) Cytokinins- stimulate cell division, and are involved in shoot growth
- 2) Gibberellic Acids- stimulate seed germination, shoot elongation and flowering
- 3) Indole-3-Butyric Acids (IBA) enhances root growth; enhances fruit and seed development

Extracts: All three enhance embryonic growth

- 1) Amino Acids
- 2) Vitamins
- 3) Glucose

Nutritionals: These products are involved with seedling and shoot growth

- 1) Soil applications
- 2) Foliar applications

We have seen that when we apply a seed treatment of CruiserMaxx Vibrance with Preside Ultra in soybeans, we have excellent stand establishment, disease control, and insect control that got the plants off to a great start. Using Preside Ultra not only provides a superior inoculant, but this product also contains the Take Off technology that is in the PGR group.

Another seed treatment option in soybeans and in corn is Tripidity. This product has shown great promise in helping establish early plant emergence and getting plants off to a quick start. The test plots in the Nehawka area with this product show consistent increases in yields due to the PGR's in Tripidity.

We have many foliar PGR's and nutritionals available that continue to feed the plant when the plant needs it the most. These products can be added to many of the herbicide programs that are already scheduled so there would be no additional application cost, giving you a good return on your investment.

Talk to your local agronomy team member about these products to help you understand how they can help improve your plant health, insure late season plant health and increase your bottom line.



Feed the Farmer

Each fall the Waverly FFA students take over the Waverly meeting room to help Jenny Green prepare about 1500 lunch bags which will be handed out to farmers during harvest. With help from Trent Bohling and Bill Hotchkiss, these three MFC employees cook fresh wieners and hand out the lunches containing hot dogs, chips, bottled water and either candy or cookies. This is a way for us to feed our farmers for one day, recognizing they feed us every day.



Recipe Corner

Buñuelos (Mexican Fritters)

Submitted by David Tarin, Waverly Location Manager



These golden crispy-sweet, tortilla-like fritters are sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar or topped with syrup.

Ingredients:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 beaten eggs
- Canola or vegetable oil

Sugar coating:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions:

1. In a mixing bowl combine flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
2. In a saucepan heat milk, butter, and vanilla and bring to a boil. Set aside to cool.
3. In a separate bowl, mix the eggs, then add the beaten eggs to the room temperature milk mixture and whisk quickly.

4. Add the liquid mixture to dry ingredients and mix well.

5. Knead dough on lightly floured surface 2 to 3 minutes until smooth.

6. After you knead the dough, divide into 20 dough balls. With a rolling pin, roll out thin tortillas.

7. Lay out all the thin tortilla flats on a tablecloth and let them dry. Turn them over once to ensure drying on both sides. This helps remove most of the moisture before frying.

8. Heat one-inch of oil in a skillet wide enough for the tortillas to fry flat. Deep-fry tortillas until golden brown, turning once. Remove from pan; stand vertically in a bowl lined with paper towels and drain excess oil.

9. While warm, sprinkle fried tortillas on both sides with sugar-cinnamon mixture.

**Please contact any of our 28 locations for your various
Grain, Agronomy, Feed, and Energy needs.**

ADAMS

402-988-2815

ADAMS WEST

402-988-2665

AUBURN

402-274-4417

AVOCA

402-275-3725

BENNET

402-782-2295

BROCK

402-856-3845

BURR

402-848-2381

COOK

402-864-4151

DUNBAR

402-259-2605

EAGLE

402-781-2305

ELK CREEK

402-877-2475

ELMWOOD

402-994-2585

GREENWOOD

402-789-2155

MANLEY

402-234-2515

MARTELL

402-794-5465

MURDOCK

402-867-3486

MYNARD

402-298-8265

NEBRASKA CITY

402-873-3391

NEHAWKA

402-227-2715

OTOE

402-269-3311

PALMYRA

402-780-5820

PRAIRIE HOME

402-786-2467

ST. MARY

402-866-4141

SYRACUSE

402-269-2313

SYRACUSE SHUTTLE

402-269-3536

TECUMSEH

402-335-3351

WALTON

402-489-6242

WAVERLY

402-786-2665