



# VISION

## From the General Manager

Ron Hunter



It is refreshing to see dry fertilizer moving out of our new facility. We have it recorded that we can load a 24 ton trailer of blended fertilizer in about 9 minutes allowing Ag Valley semis or local customers to pick up their dry fertilizer needs quickly and keep application equipment running. We are in the early stages of dry application and every indication is that the new facilities speed will do a much better job of keeping applicators running even though we will be hauling product greater distances. We purchased 7 late model tractors and 7 new 24 ton trailers to ensure that we would be able to reach out and meet customer needs in this busy season that is just ahead of us. We also have the ability to deliver you a dry load of fertilizer if you don't have the time to come in and get it. Give Ag Valley the opportunity to be your supplier of choice for all your dry fertilizer needs.

You will notice that a lot of the plastic at Ag Valley facilities has been disappearing quickly over the last 2 months. The grain team has been working hard to get the ground piles up before spring rains come and before the time that our auditors come out to measure. Wet corn isn't always a good thing and men coming out of the cities to measure up grain piles might not be a good thing either. They do well when they measure grain in a bin.

A large amount of our corn is being moved to our shipping facilities destined for feed, ethanol or export. The cornbelt continues to have excess bushels that tend to hold basis levels lower. An interesting article I received last week talked about the 3 major grain export hubs in the world that were created by excess production in each of their areas. The hubs are the U.S., Brazil/Argentina and Russia/Ukraine. These areas had 11% of the world's population and 48% of the world's corn production in 15/16. It also talks about the deterioration of the U.S. market share caused by commodities being priced higher to offset greater fixed cost of production in America. We have the best production system and best delivery system but it comes with a cost.

Ag Valley has and will continue to invest in assets and manpower to provide the quality of service and information to help our customers be successful. The landscape of Ag Valley business centers continue to change as we adjust to the new market values in agriculture today. We liked the business model that was in place 5 years ago but I think that model is gone and has been replaced with a much leaner model that doesn't allow duplication that increases cost. Ag Valleys goal is always to be the best supplier of goods and services at fair market values that will bring value to our members and allow Ag Valley to continue to invest in producer needs for the future.

As we go into this busy season give Ag Valley, its assets and its employee group the opportunity to partner with you in all your farm needs.

# Grain Report

Fran Thooft



I would like to thank everyone that attended one of our grain marketing meetings. Jim Warren does a great job of presenting what is going on in the marketplace. Wish there was more bullish news to talk about. As we go into the 2017 marketing year there is still a lot of things to think about. Fundamental news and fund buying remains a vehicle for price rallies. South American Soybean crop continues to get larger. Seems like we are far enough along now that the South American crop is close to being made. Dollar strength, US exports and the Trump administration. The bearish news is old news; traders are waiting for any new factors to trade on. Time will tell and weather will be volatile throughout the growing season. Technical buying provides support in corn. Trumpanomics will influence the market both directions. A warm spell for the U.S. Plains will cause a portion of the region's hard red winter wheat to come out of dormancy which sets the stage for concern if extreme cold would revisit the area. Make sure to get you grain offers in place if you have prices in mind. We will continue to see market volatility. There has been some new crop pricing done at the \$3.25-\$3.60 area. Soybeans we have had guys start at anything above \$9 and our recent high was 9.49. May be a good place to start getting some grain priced. Now is a good time to follow your grain marketing plan.

USDA will issue its monthly crop report on March 9<sup>th</sup>. The next big USDA report will be March 31<sup>st</sup> Grain stocks and we get a look at prospective plantings for the 2017 year. We keep hearing reports of increased soybean acres do to price and less input cost. Will corn rally going into spring time to buy acres? Wheat acres are down in the area 10-15% so what gets planted in those acres?

February is the pricing month for crop insurance. Last year Dec corn average was 3.86 compared to \$3.97 so far, this month. Soybeans last year \$8.85 and compared to the average so far, this month. \$10.22.

Thanks for allowing us to earn your business. Be sure to check your bins. With the warm temperatures, we have had lately this could start to create some issues. Ag Valley has trucks to help move your farm stored grain. Give us a call.



Jim Warren presenting what's going on in the marketplace at the Grain Marketing Meeting in Edison on Feb. 23rd.

# Safety Report

Ken Moore



Terry shared an article from the Professional Safety Newsletter recently that highlighted the child fatality incident rates in the agriculture industry. The statistics mentioned in the article were compiled by the National Children’s Center for Rural Agricultural Health and Safety (NCCRAHS) and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). The headline above the article states: **“Child Death Toll Highest in Agricultural Industry”**. The article references a report issued by NCCRAHS that examines the state of U.S. childhood agricultural injuries.

Some of the key findings in this report and reviewed in this article are:

- The leading sources of adolescent fatalities on farms are machinery, motor vehicles and ATVs and drowning.
- Approximately 33 children in the U.S. are injured every day in agriculture-related incidents.
- Fatalities among agricultural workers under age 16 were consistently higher than among non-agricultural industries from 2003 to 2010.
- Injuries among 10 to 19 year old farmworkers have increased since 2012.
- During the period analyzed for the NCCRAHS report, 7,469 youth living on a farm were injured with 60% of those injuries occurring when the child was not working.

As you prepare for a busy spring field preparation and planting season, can you spare a few minutes to review the hazards in and around your operation with the young people involved? This would also involve reminding those that are too young to recognize danger to avoid those areas that are unsafe for them.

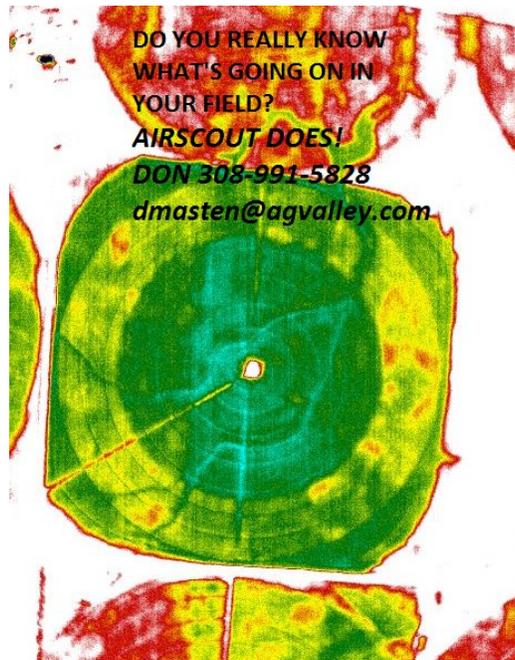
**Have a Happy and Safe St. Patrick’s Day.**

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The first deadline for AirScout sign up is March 15th to guarantee the first image. You can still sign up after March 15th; however, that first image will no be available to you. Please call Don Masten at 308-991-5828.



## CHICK DAYS!

Coming Soon to Ag Valley Co-op  
March 20th-24th

- Buff Orpington, Rhode Island Red, Barred Rock, and Columbian Wyandotte breeds available in store- pullets and cockerels
- Larger numbers of these breeds and many other breeds of chicks, ducks, and geese available by pre-order!
- Pre-order by March 6 to have the best chance of availability March 20-24
- Discounts on starter feed during chick days!
- Feeders, waterers, heat lamps, bulbs, and shavings also available
- 10% discount offered on animals used for 4-H projects

For pricing and more information contact:

Jennifer Gigax- 785-259-6496

Susan @ Elevator office- 785-877-5131