

Merry Christmas to you from all the employees of the Farmers Elevator & Exchange

Jesse Blackford – Feed Mill Asst. Supervisor
 Mike Bryant – Grain/Feed Outside Operations
 Lambert Buckman – Feed Delivery
 Bryan Carey- Feed Delivery
 Gary Carr – Agronomy Sales Mgr.
 Gary Cullifer- Transportation
 Ron Dean – Livestock Specialist
 Nicole Goellner – Student Worker
 Eulynn Keller- Livestock Prod. Asst./Office Assistant
 Jeneane Diffenderfer- Office Manager
 Adam Grove – Agronomy Operations Mgr.
 Shaun Harris – Feed Delivery
 Austin Hawker – Custom Application
 Eddie Jones – Operations Mgr.
 Kody Karr – Feed Milling Operations

T.J. Lawless- Custom Application
 Bill Masterson - Feed Delivery/General Labor
 Patrick Maupin – Feed Delivery
 Marlin McCormick – General Manager
 Curt Miller – Mgmt. Support Specialist/Grain Mktg.
 Ben Norvell – Feed Mill Supervisor
 Joe Pratt – Feed Milling Operations
 Jeanette Redman – Clerical Staff
 Brenna Ruth – Agronomy Sales
 Justin Schwada – Elevator Operations
 John Scodino – General Labor/NH3 Operations
 David Studer – General Operations/Transportation Ops
 Zach Taylor – Feed Milling Operations
 Tom Westhoff – General Labor/Agronomy Operations
 Jeremy Whelan – Custom Application



Winter Hours at Farmers Elevator begin on December 19.

Business hours will be: 8:00 AM—5:00 PM Mon-Friday
 8:00 AM—12:00 noon Saturday



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We invite you to stop by our main office and pick up your 2017 weekly, stick-up and wall calendars! May you and yours have a very Merry Christmas!

A schedule of our Christmas and New Year holidays is listed inside this newsletter....



Manager's Corner
 by Marlin McCormick, Gen. Mgr.

History of agriculture in the U.S. is very interesting, especially the era post-WWI when Farmers Elevator & Exchange Co. was started. I recently read the article 'Adaptability of Tractor to Small Farm' written and published in Farm Implement News magazine in 1919. The author begins with the question, "What is the smallest size of farm which a tractor may be expected to prove profitable?" A survey conducted in a large corn-producing state caused the Dept. of Ag to conclude that a tractor was 'a proven profitable investment on farms of 180 acres and over'. 'It should not be expected to be profitable at less than 130 acres.' The article said this fact was based on using the tractor only to plow and prepare the seed bed but no diversified application of tractor usage such as tasks that called for less horsepower were included. Many of those were needed on all farms, big and small. There is no doubt that due to a number of farm kids leaving agriculture at that time, small farms needed to replace labor and be able to increase efficiency. Tractor manufacturers had an important task of developing smaller tractors and more implements that would fit the more diversified needs of both big and smaller farms. Grain farmers needed a market place to sell their grain, thus grain elevators sprung up to receive, store and ship grain. Operators of small farms could not afford to own processing equipment so the Farmers Elevator added feed milling. Although more labor-intensive than simply handling and shipping grain, milling feed and sourcing ingredients by rail and truck provided livestock producers with a source to balance diets for their livestock. Fast forward to 2016, this feed milling process that has evolved

over time at this company has also created a strong local market for corn which benefits the local grain producer. Since 1919, Farmers Elevator & Exchange Company has been evolving and meeting many challenges in order to serve the needs of farmers. Today as then, we are here to serve and help you produce a crop, provide you a market for your grain and to mill livestock feed. We want to sincerely **thank you** for your business and hope to serve you in the coming year!

Christmas/New Year's Holiday Schedule
 *Our offices will be **CLOSED** on Saturday, December 24 for Christmas Eve and on Monday, December 26 for Christmas.
 *We will also be **CLOSED** on Monday, January 2 for New Years Day.
 Please find below our **Feed Order/Delivery Schedule for these Holidays:**

Order by 10 AM on this day	For delivery on this day
Thursday Dec. 22	Friday, Dec. 23
Friday, Dec. 23	Tuesday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 29	Tuesday, January 3

(Circa 1919)

268 pages packed with ideas for making more money with hogs.

This new book given to you FREE

ARE you making as much profit from your hogs as you should? Here is a new 268-page book, "Success With Hogs," that will help you increase your hog profits. Its 48 chapters are packed with valuable information. You can get one of these books absolutely free. See below.

"Success With Hogs" tells how to start a hog farm, lay out the buildings, arrange hog lots, select best type of hog, gives score cards of various breeds, how to breed to best advantage, how to care for brood sows, young pigs, weaning pigs, how to mark litter, how to feed profitably, gives plans for hog houses, feeding equipment, troughs, self-feeders, tells how to combat disease, use vaccines, get rid of weasels, how to fit hogs for the show ring, how to judge hogs, tells best time to market hogs—plans that will boost your hog profits tremendously.

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Simply get two of your neighbors to subscribe to SYSTEM ON THE FARM at \$2 per year. Send us the \$4 (Canada \$5) and we'll send you a copy of "Success With Hogs," absolutely free. Book alone, \$1.50.

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SYSTEM ON THE FARM
 Can. Huron and Erie Streets, Chicago

Annual Stockholders Meeting Held November 14

Dinner was served by the Immanuel ladies and LIGHT from West Ely and the Ladies Guild of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Monroe City at our 97th annual stockholders' meeting November 14 at Monroe City High School. Mark Gardiner of Gardiner Thomsen CPA's reviewed the financial statement for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2016. **Sam Smith** was elected to the Board of Directors. Carl Thompson who chose to not seek another term on the Board was presented a clock by President Greg Drebes in appreciation of his nine years of service as a member of the Board of Directors (see photo above). Door prize winners included: Jim Jarman, J.T. Spalding, Martin Hager, David Locke, Vaughn Porter, David Yates, Floyd Buckman, Mary Tarpin, Joe Ralph Buckman, Richie Nieman and Carl Thompson.



It is late November and we are finally experiencing some cold weather! The weather so far this fall has been amazing, and it has allowed many of us to

get a lot of fall work done. Harvest is wrapped up for the most part and, generally speaking, it was a bountiful harvest! Being in the agronomy business like we are, we tend to notice trends in different farming practices that translate to yield. For example, 2016 was definitely a year where having adequate fertility was highly beneficial! In both corn and soybeans, the growers that have been applying generous amounts of fertilizer each year were in a better position to utilize



the late season moisture we had this past growing season. We

also noticed that other high management practices like fungicide, insecticide, starter fertilizer, and micronutrients allowed those growers the opportunity to go from an above average year to a phenomenal year in terms of yield. Another practice that impacted yields were tillage practices. From what we can tell, many places where growers used deep tillage the yields tended to be very good. However, we realize that certain tillage practices don't make sense on every farm every year. Looser soils were able to utilize the water better and allowed the plant roots to thrive. You have heard much of this before and so you might wonder why we continue to talk about it. The reason is the season! This season is the time of year to map out your input costs for next year, and as you know, it is more important than ever.

Gary and I recently had the privilege of hearing a presentation from an economist from Kansas State University. His outlook on the near future in agriculture was somewhat bleak. From what he can tell, the commodity prices are not going to improve for at least the next couple of years. Having three consecutive years of record high yields nationwide has led to a surplus of grain, even though the demand is as high as it has ever been. Currently, when you punch in the numbers it seems that soybeans would be a more profitable crop in 2017. We have already heard a number of people say that they are considering changing their rotation to plant more soybeans next year. While the prices of soybeans currently make them the more profitable crop, that can change very quickly. If South America has a large soybean crop, that will impact the price. South America is in planting season right now,

so six months from now that market could look very different. Also, China is importing very large quantities of soybeans. If they were to discontinue this, the soybean market would again be impacted greatly. So before you switch all of your acres to soybeans next year, take some of these things into consideration.

You may be wondering how anyone can possibly make money in this economic climate. There is no guarantee. The best way to weather the storm is to raise as many bushels as you possibly can! There is nothing wrong with going through your input costs and trying to trim in some places where you see fit. Just be careful to not sacrifice yield in the process. One way to do that is to consider how much products are costing you per bushel, not just the cost per acre.

Part of our job here at Farmers Elevator is to help you select the best products and practices for your farm that will help you succeed. This is also why we offer special programs to help you save money on certain products. We will be offering Pre-Pay programs for chemical and fertilizer products again this year. This is the best way we know to save on the cost of crop protection products. What we don't want to do is to sell less effective chemistries. We realize those products may cost less up front, but if you sacrifice yield because they don't work as well you have hurt your profitability. Pre-paying for fertilizer can be very beneficial as well. Purchasing your tons in the off-season is normally a good move, as the price tends to increase when the demand increases in the spring. We will be offering pre-pay pricing from mid-December through January 15th or thereabouts. Before you make the decision to buy, please sit down with us or your trusted financial advisor and do a cash flow analysis. In order to break even or turn a profit, you need to be aware of how many bushels you need to raise and at what target price you need to sell those bushels at. We are fortunate to have the program that will help us walk you through that process, and we will be happy to work with you.

We are optimistic for the future, and want nothing more than to help you succeed! We wish you all good health and happiness this holiday season, and God Bless!

Things to remember:

- **Pre-Pay Programs: (approx.) Dec. 15-Jan. 15**
- **Seed Discounts are still available**
- **Make an appointment with us for a farm planning meeting**

Merry Christmas!



January 1 and VFD — Almost Here

We have had a number of projects going on in and around our grain and feed milling facilities of late. We appreciate your cooperation as we schedule millwrights and vendors to perform specific tasks in our facilities. As of late, our feed mill and supporting grain facility remains busy every day in our endeavor to process and deliver livestock feed to producers in our area. In mid-December we will be installing a computer software program and some new equipment from a company called Easy Automation. This move will enhance our feed ordering process with clients and it will also provide computer-generated 'close-out' information to swine producers who finish hogs as well as track animal nutrition information on sow farms. This new software will also give us a leg up for gathering and tracking information necessary as we roll out FDA's request for the VFD (Veterinary Feed Directive) Program that is required by all feed manufacturers beginning on January 1, 2017. With that said, if you raise livestock and have not already done so, you will need to establish a relationship with a veterinarian now. This is due to the regulations affecting everyone who administers important antibiotics that are applied and in feed or water source. Please be certain to see our 'Holiday Feed Order/Delivery Schedule' listed on page one of this newsletter and by all means, please call us

FOUR Key Points

- 1 **Establish a VCPR** with your veterinarian
- 2 **Obtain a VFD for feed containing antibiotics** medically important to human health
- 3 **Use VFD antibiotics only on animals** as directed
- 4 **Keep a record of each VFD for two years**

if you have any questions.

KEEP AN EYE on new corn stored on the farm. Damaged kernels and a long, warm fall are a continued concern given the fungus, molds and insects now being found that developed in the field and that are harboring in the stored corn. If corn in the bin is below 55 to 60 degrees F, inspect grain every two weeks. Above this temperature, **inspect it weekly**. Use a grain probe to take samples in a systematic pattern first from the surface (horizontally, about 2 inches deep) and then from the bottom of the grain mass. Inspect both the center and the area near the walls no farther apart than 20 feet. During probing, "hot spots" may be felt on the grain surface or off odors may be detected. These are indications of insect activity and should be checked. During the colder months, the insects will congregate in the center of the grain mass, so sampling at that location will be more important. Sift the probe contents through 10-12-mesh screen and examine it for Insects. Stored grain should contain minimal foreign material and have a moisture content of 14% or less. **Core the bin to removed fines.** This removes many of the hard-packed fines in the center of the bin and allows for better air flow. If the grain is dried to 14% moisture or less, cool it as soon as possible by running aeration fans on cool nights. Reducing the grain temperature to less than 60° F stops insect reproduction and lowering it to less than 50° F stops insect feeding. The sooner the temperature can be lowered, the better. Run aeration fans whenever the air is cooler than the grain. Cooler air will not wet dry grain. Keep in mind that grain does not manage itself. Always be safe.



The Syngenta Blue Jacket Program is a program offered to allow local crop protection retail dealers such as Farmers Elevator to support the local FFA chapter. Once again this year the Farmers Elevator & Exchange Company was able to earn \$750 and one FFA Jacket that was donated to the Monroe City FFA Chapter. The \$750 was split amongst all first-year members lowering the cost of their jackets. The one free FFA jacket was awarded to Mya Talley, who was this year's first Greenhand to recite the FFA Creed. Pictured above with Mya (center) are Gary Carr and Brenna Ruth of the Farmers Elevator.



MERRY CHRISTMAS