

W.I.N. | What's Important Now?

Your answer to our title's question may have a profound impact on your grain marketing success. W. I. N., an acronym for the question, "what's important now?" is a concept successfully employed by a famous football coach and used by many trainers.

One such coach relates how his players may have the best skills in the world, but are not fully present in the game because of distractions which reduce their effectiveness. He learned that he could motivate his players to be present if they would continually ask themselves one question: "what's important now?" He knew that they could win if they devoted their entire being to answering that one question.

Our present discussion deals with helping you to be a good grain marketer. What's important right now, as far as becoming a winning grain marketer? Since the past is gone, the future is unknown and the present is all we have, how can we effectively use the present to become winners? Somehow, we need to be able to see the big picture and the smallest details at the same time and adapt to reality. Nothing else really matters. The coach said that his players had trouble staying in the game because distractions reduced their effectiveness. Have you as grain marketers had any distractions lately?

Changes That Distract

Change is something that we all recognize to be the norm. Saying that you have experienced some changes that could be distracting and prevent you from being a winning grain marketer is a huge understatement. You are likely either done planting or currently planting the 2022 corn and soybean crops. So far, as of this writing, the November 2022 soybean contract has traded from a low of \$8.40 to a high of \$15.41. The December 2022 corn contract has traded from a low of \$3.69 to a high of \$7.57. New users of our commodities, global uncertainty, and inflation have caused prices to rise to record levels. These happenings become extremely distracting, especially if you already booked some or most of your 2022 production near the lower end of these ranges. We cannot turn back the clock and reverse a good decision that we made using the facts available at the time. As distracting as these facts may be, we cannot allow them to render us ineffective in dealing with what's important now.

Changes in your cost to produce a crop are also phenomenal. As commodity prices have climbed to lofty levels, your input costs have joined in the ascent too. Fertilizer, seed, fuel, land rent, equipment costs and many other miscellaneous costs have gone through the roof as well. This is very distracting to see such huge changes in cost of production in such a short period of time. But, again, we cannot allow the huge run-up in costs to deter us from dealing with what's important now.

Some Things Never Change

Take courage! In spite of the constancy of change, some concepts never change and one of those concepts deserves your immediate attention. We have long advocated that commodity market prices need to be evaluated in terms of profit to the producer. In other words, think profit, not price. The process is amazingly simple. You have a good handle on your cost of production for 2022 now because you have probably bought many of your inputs already. You have records of past years' yields and can arrive at a reasonable projected average yield. Armed with those two bits of information, you can use the Profit Grid below to estimate your profit potential at a market price of \$7.00 on corn and \$14.50 on soybeans. (Cash prices as of this writing) We have already plugged in cost of production numbers that have been tossed around recently at educational meetings. These charts would seem to confirm the long-standing belief of many that there is no consistent relationship between your cost of production and what the market is willing to pay you. For many years, the market paid only a nominal return above costs and now it is rewarding you an unbelievable level of profit. This is actionable information and is important now!

		1 Acres	\$7.00 per bushel								
		CORN									
		COST PER ACRE									
		\$850	\$875	\$900	\$925	\$950	\$975	\$1,000	\$1,025	\$1,050	\$1,075
YIELD	180	\$410	\$385	\$360	\$335	\$310	\$285	\$260	\$235	\$210	\$185
	190	\$480	\$455	\$430	\$405	\$380	\$355	\$330	\$305	\$280	\$255
	200	\$550	\$525	\$500	\$475	\$450	\$425	\$400	\$375	\$350	\$325
	210	\$620	\$595	\$570	\$545	\$520	\$495	\$470	\$445	\$420	\$395
PER	220	\$690	\$665	\$640	\$615	\$590	\$565	\$540	\$515	\$490	\$465
	230	\$760	\$735	\$710	\$685	\$660	\$635	\$610	\$585	\$560	\$535
	240	\$830	\$805	\$780	\$755	\$730	\$705	\$680	\$655	\$630	\$605
ACRE	250	\$900	\$875	\$850	\$825	\$800	\$775	\$750	\$725	\$700	\$675
	260	\$970	\$945	\$920	\$895	\$870	\$845	\$820	\$795	\$770	\$745
	270	\$1,040	\$1,015	\$990	\$965	\$940	\$915	\$890	\$865	\$840	\$815

		1 Acres		\$14.50 per bushel								SOYBEANS	
		COST PER ACRE											
		\$500	\$525	\$550	\$575	\$600	\$625	\$650	\$675	\$700	\$725		
YIELD PER ACRE	35	\$8	(\$18)	(\$43)	(\$68)	(\$93)	(\$118)	(\$143)	(\$168)	(\$193)	(\$218)		
	45	\$153	\$128	\$103	\$78	\$53	\$28	\$3	(\$23)	(\$48)	(\$73)		
	55	\$298	\$273	\$248	\$223	\$198	\$173	\$148	\$123	\$98	\$73		
	65	\$443	\$418	\$393	\$368	\$343	\$318	\$293	\$268	\$243	\$218		
	75	\$588	\$563	\$538	\$513	\$488	\$463	\$438	\$413	\$388	\$363		
	85	\$733	\$708	\$683	\$658	\$633	\$608	\$583	\$558	\$533	\$508		
	95	\$878	\$853	\$828	\$803	\$778	\$753	\$728	\$703	\$678	\$653		
	105	\$1,023	\$998	\$973	\$948	\$923	\$898	\$873	\$848	\$823	\$798		
	115	\$1,168	\$1,143	\$1,118	\$1,093	\$1,068	\$1,043	\$1,018	\$993	\$968	\$943		
	125	\$1,313	\$1,288	\$1,263	\$1,238	\$1,213	\$1,188	\$1,163	\$1,138	\$1,113	\$1,088		

What's Your W.I.N.?

Let's personalize the W.I.N. concept. What's really important now? Depending on what marketing steps you have already taken, your answers will vary, however your list should be a short one and may include such things as the following.

1. Separate yourself from the market "noise." When Tiger Woods was asked how he handled the pressure of making the chip shot that clinched his winning the last of the four major championships, he replied, "I just tried to stay in the moment and focus on the shot I had to make." You are at the same juncture today.
2. Use the Profit Grid demonstrated on the opposite page to see where you stand. In these volatile times, circumstances can change so fast. Rising market prices have gained on rising costs on the wild ride up. What happens if the market decides to fall? Will costs fall as fast as markets sometimes fall?
3. Get a handle on your coverage provided by the 2022 Crop Insurance.
4. Make sales accordingly.