

connections

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connections

Welcome to the First Issue of Our New *Connections* Magazine!

By Chris Menke, Marketing Communications Director

"Now" is smartphones, tablets and the internet on your watch. It's never been easier to obtain information at a moment's notice. This publication is not about now, it's about you. This new *Connections* magazine aims to share your cooperative's culture and values through member success stories, achievements, and experiences.

Viafield would not exist without you. By doing business with us, we believe that you get more than grain storage, fuel delivery, fertilizer application, or top quality livestock feed, you get partners who truly care about your operation.

A magazine once every quarter has an advantage over a newsletter every month. We will focus attention on the current big news in each of our divisions. You'll see

what I mean on pages 7-9. There you'll find an overview of recently completed grain construction projects in Elgin and Manly. Regional Team Leaders Rick Davis and Darwin Tabbert lead your tour.

In addition, we'll bring you inspiring stories of opportunity and entrepreneurial spirit. Bill Hayes, our feed division manager, shares a great story on page 11 about a young community college graduate looking to get into agriculture. Thanks to Bill, he was connected to all the right resources in pork production.

Let me know if you like the new format. We're hoping to make taking an active interest in your cooperative easy on the eyes. And, if you have suggestions for future features let me know.



Are You Missing Out on a Fuel-Pricing

Smorgasbord?

If you can't customize this program the way you want...well, I don't know what would make you happy."

Brian Chambers of Marble Rock is talking about the Viafield Automated Fuel Delivery (AFD) program he signed up for two and a half years ago. "It's a smorgasbord of diesel pricing."

When Energy Sales Specialist Matt Katcher first described the AFD program to Brian, he pitched the idea of testing the automated tank-monitoring system on Brian's off-road diesel barrel. Recently Brian added the feature to his on-road diesel tank as well. He's that sold on the AFD system.

"...the last thing I want to deal with is ordering fuel for tomorrow."

"When I come in from the field at 9 or 10 at night, the last thing I want to deal with is ordering fuel for tomorrow," Brian explains. Thanks to the small attached monitor, a cell phone message will go out automatically (the tank will signal a need based on either your past usage history or your pre-set fill preferences) and dispatch a Cenex® delivery truck.

"I know some guys say, 'But I'd be giving up control of my pricing once delivery is automatic.' I tell them they'll actually have more ability to control pricing because they'll choose when to pay for the fuel in that tank."

When Brian's barrel was full coming into spring 2015, he elected to buy out the whole thing and save \$1,000. Though he originally thought he and Matt might communicate about fuel less often, they've actually had more reasons to discuss pricing. That allows Brian more freedom to cash-flow, knowing favorable price points aren't limited to the day his tank fills.

"If you want to pay hand-to-mouth as you use fuel, that's ok, but I find I do better using the monthly price average. Over the last two months, my average price beat the daily 22 out of every 30 days."

Matt says, "The program is flexible and customizable. You could tell me to buy fuel for you every day or you could say you want to pay for all your gallons at once. Why rely on luck to help you choose the one day when the price suits your profitability picture? Sign up for AFD and you don't have to follow the energy markets. That's something I'll do for you."

Brian agrees. "Tell your Viafield energy rep what pricing strategy you want and expect the job to get done. Then let the technology do its job so you never have to worry about having enough fuel to make it. The other cool thing is you can contract, too, if that works better for you financially."

"It makes sense," Brian insists. "Just ask yourself: What if you had to start every month by telling the power company how much electricity you plan to use?" Just as electrical power waits in reserve for the times you need it, Brian knows that because AFD has already signaled for a fill, he'll have the supply he needs to keep rolling.



Matt Katcher and Brian Chambers

It Runs on a Cell Phone

- Automated Fuel Delivery from Viafield and Cenex® sends a signal when the tank reaches a pre-set low level.
- All usage and levels are recorded for you to view online at any time.
- Over time, the system will learn your usage levels, or we can custom set the fill point to your specific preferences.
- There's no charge to the customer for the monitor.



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This Fall in Elgin and Manly It Was “OPEN YOUR HOPPERS AND GO!”

Construction in Manly and Elgin this summer accomplished exactly what regional operations team leaders Darwin Tabbert and Rick Davis hoped for. They knew from the beginning Viafield was investing in speed and space. Darwin points out, “Farmers in Manly are really happy. During harvest it was open your hoppers and go!”

Rick continues, “In Elgin we doubled intake capacity for the feed mill and sped up deliveries considerably. We have 1.8 million bushels capacity, with mill use at 3.5 million, thanks to adding 900,000 bushels of storage there. A new dryer will handle 4,700 bushels per hour and the additional dump pit ramps us up from 8,000 bushels receiving capacity per hour to 15,000.”

(continued on page 9)



Rick Davis



Darwin Tabbert



Heightened receiving speed was the goal in Manly.



Jason Tritch and Taylor Greenwood prove loads are in and out so quickly in Manly now that they have plenty of time for maintenance.



Manly location team leader Josh Heagel reports hearing nothing but good things about the upgrade.



New legs contribute to speed in Manly.



(continued from page 7)

Elgin improvements went operational in mid-September reaching the stated intake goal in a hurry. “We took in 150,000 bushels in one day. Traffic moves along well—mostly in and right back out,” Rick notes. “We greatly improved efficiencies at this location and throughout the region. We don’t need to move as much grain from other locations to keep the feed mill supplied.”

There’s also been a trickle-down effect since we no longer need to dry corn in Clermont. Rick reports that facility is now dedicated to soybeans.

Rick knows these improvements attracted new customers during harvest. “That’s another reason it was a worthwhile project!”

Heightened receiving speed was also the goal in Manly. “We wanted to increase our capacity to take grain in Manly. We had 2.7 million bushels of storage space there already but we wanted to speed up flow within the facility. So we added a 20,000-bushel-per-hour leg with

a new 1,000 bushel pit to go along with the existing two 12,000-bushel-per-hour legs.”

There are also two new conveyors with 32,000-bushel-per-hour capabilities. “Now legs reach three bins, giving employees in Manly more options at the peak of harvest,” Darwin continues.

“As part of making room for new construction, crews demolished a six-pack of bins built in the 1940s. We also took down two 21-foot, 20,000-bushel bins. “Those we will rebuild,” Darwin says. “By the close of harvest there were still a few things to finish, but the pit and leg were operational starting October 16. Working with two of three drags in place, the new setup handled 440,000 bushels in three days.

“In Manly they can now load out bean trains on the Iowa Northern during harvest or fill corn trains during bean harvest. I’d say these improvements will do the job!”

Construction in Elgin started in mid-March and the project went fully functional in time for harvest, resulting in both speed and space.



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Here's a Way Young Farmers Can Build Equity for Themselves



During a recent open house at a new hog barn, feed division manager Bill Hayes heard the same words conversation after conversation. Farmers in their 50s and 60s marveled at the foresight of a beginning entrepreneur and said, "I wish I'd invested in something like this when I was younger!"

The young owner of the new swine setup is equally excited about the potential payoff from his investment. "He's 22 and look what he's already got going for him," Bill says. "Here's a young guy who came out of community college seeking a way to get into agriculture. I'd say he's found it."

At first, Bill needed to convince the young man of today's opportunities in pork production. "He likes cattle. So I called in



Steve Woods, our Purina Swine Specialist. Steve's so enthusiastic about pork production it's not likely you can sit in a room with him and not be convinced." Next, Steve went to work looking for financing for a new swine barn. He found a banker willing to work with young people, one who liked the program

A new hog barn awaits its first load of pigs.

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Steve laid out. "Hearing that news, our young farmer caught fire," Bill recalls. "He started thinking this might work. Next, he convinced his parents (whose farm would be home to the new hog site) and began talking with the neighbors.

"We often hear about neighbors who are unhappy with a hog building going up nearby. That wasn't the case this time. They were excited for him and encouraged him to take this step while he's young enough to get real benefit from his investment and labor."

All that encouragement carried the new producer through four months of planning and review. Bill doesn't imply building a new



barn is simple. There are permits to acquire and manure management plans to outline. "From bankers to abstract people to the well company to the builder, there were plenty of arrangements to make. And at that point our young friend needed to start adding some of his own money to the project."

Once he acquired all those permits the actual building process moved quickly. The barn went up in 60 to 65 days and, by Nov. 6, stood ready for its first truckload of 30- to 40-pound feeder pigs. "At least ten times I heard his neighbors asking each other 'Is this something that will work for our kids?'" Bill Hayes thinks it will work and he's ready to discuss the possibilities!

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Contact Your Viafield Swine Livestock Production Specialist today!

1. When compared to previous formulations of the same products in Purina Animal Nutrition trials: WF007, FT142N-15.



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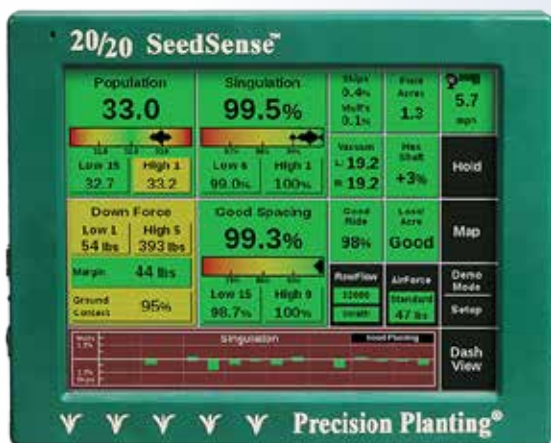
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Is Your Planter Ready for Accuracy Next Season?

Don't limit yield potential and, ultimately, profitability by allowing your planter to underperform.

Our precision ag specialist Nick Johansen encourages you to take advantage of opportunities this winter to discover all the ways you can improve planter management. "Our planter clinics for producers are planned for February 17, 18, and 19," Nick says. "Be sure to watch for an invitation by mail."

These events will feature Doug Wiegard, Central Iowa Regional Manager for Precision Planting®, the source of state-of-the-art planting hardware and software designed from the



SeedSense™ allows you to monitor more than a general view of your planting success. You'll see it happen seed by seed.

ground up to improve performance. Meter assessments and planter inspections are two other ways to check performance. Sign up by Dec. 31 for one of these events and you'll capture a discount on any meter parts replaced during our seasonal calibration.

"Meter calibration is huge in preparing your planter for next season," Nick continues. "Precision ag specialist Brian Dirksen and I already work with 400 units throughout our Viafield service area. Thanks to Precision Planting software and technology, you can control every aspect of the planting process—the 20 metrics SeedSense is constantly monitoring."

Those monitored factors include bounce of the row units and amount of weight carried on the gauge wheels. Watching the 20/20 SeedSense monitor, you'll know whether you're planting too shallow or too deep for uniform emergence. Why do those measures matter? "Effective planting determines the start of your whole year," Nick emphasizes. "There's research based on the past five years proving the yield

difference when all seed in a field emerge at the same time. You can control all those settings from your cab.

"At our planter clinics we have one goal: Turning your planter into a piece of high-performance equipment. If you aren't already using SeedSense, it would be a good first step. There is also a collection of hardware and software improvements such as DeltaForce, which is individual hydraulic row control that replaces side springs or manual airbags on your planter."


Say one row falls into a tire rut or along a headland. DeltaForce adjusts each row independently so planter depth remains uniform across all rows for each pass across the field. "Data shows it adds 11 bushels per acre or, at today's prices, \$36 per acre. On 1,000 acres that's an additional \$36,000!

"Even if you attended our clinic last year, you will take something new away from this year's event," Nick insists. "How your planter affects emergence is the number-one topic. We'll discuss downforce management, residue management, and row-unit maintenance. The key is using the winter months to seek out and overcome simple issues. There is always more to learn from your planter."

You don't have to wait for one of the planter clinics to talk about Precision Planting. To assure you get full value from your precision ag investments, Brian and Nick can be reached anytime by phone at 583-380-8952 (Brian) and 641-330-9236 (Nick). "This is definitely an information driven precision ag service," Nick affirms.



Nick Johansen



It's time to shut down the party in your cornfield.

▶▶ If tough broadleaf weeds like giant ragweed, waterhemp and Palmer amaranth are laughing away at your current corn herbicide, it's time to make a switch. This year load the sprayer with Acuron®, the new corn herbicide from Syngenta. With a brand-new active ingredient that herbicide-resistant weeds have never been up against, Acuron can wipe the nutrient-sucking smiles right off their faces. ◀◀

For more information, visit Acuron-Herbicide.com to get the last laugh or contact: Viafield | Contact your local location today!



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Happy Holidays!



Have You Heard?

Young people who want to come back to the farm but are looking for an additional income stream should talk with Bill Hayes and Steve Woods, our area swine specialists from Purina. Steve stays in touch with swine integrators and large producers who are looking for more pig spaces in eastern Iowa. They're offering good contracting opportunities.

A new hog site on your farm brings with it the value of building ownership and a ready source of fertilizer. Call Steve at 563-380-4379, or talk with Bill Hayes at 563-426-5566.